LETTERS,

TO THE

KING,

FROM AN

OLD PATRIOTIC QUAKER,

LATELY DECEASED.

—TO A PRINCE WHOSE HEART IS CORRUPT, IT IS IN VAIN TO SPEAK: AND FOR SUCH A PRINCE I WOULD NOT BE THOUGHT TO WRITE.

Bolingbroke.

LONDON:
Printed for R. BALDWIN, in Pater-noſter-Row.
M.DCC.LXXVIII.

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IT is not material how theſe Letters came into the hands of the Editor. Nor is he anſwerable, in the leaſt, for the peculiarities of the Author. It has been common enough, of late years, for Subjects, thus publicly to addreſs their Sovereign. The ſtyle, indeed, is ſingular, but it is the ſtyle which the pro-

feſſed principles of the Quakers oblige them to uſe. This apparent bluntneſs may ſtartle ſome readers, and the Editor has no other apology to offer for it, than that every author has his own manner of expreſſion as well as of conception: But in my mind, the native effuſions of an honeſt heart are greatly preferable to the fulſome language of adulation. And though this homely Quaker talks to his prince with freedom and without ceremony, he never forgets that he is him-

himſelf a ſubject. I once intended to have altered ſuch phraſes as appeared moſt exceptionable, but his friends would by no means allow me: and to be ſure the performance has more the air of originalty: as it is I have only to add, that I found the following paſſage prefixed to the manuſcript in the Author's own characters.

It is the ſingular privilege of every Engliſhman to cenſure or

applaud the meaſures of adminiſtration as they happen to ſtrike him. We ought, however, to proceed on all ſuch occaſions in the rooted conviction that the liberty of the preſs is the great Palladium of our boaſted conſtitution, and that they who can abuſe the one, are at beſt but hollow and perfidious friends of the other.

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LETTER I.

TO

GEORGE THE THIRD,

KING OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE DOMINIONS THEREUNTO BELONGING, ONE OF THE PEOPLE CALLED QUAKERS WISHETH ALL HAPPINESS IN SOUL, BODY, AND ESTATE.

PATRIOTS dictate to Kings, and I assume the name merely that my advice may have the more dignity and weight. Nor do I ap-

proach the throne either with fear or trembling, but with a heart full of confidence in thy docility and attention.

It is not the province of one mortal to know the thoughts of another; but the countenance is often an index to the mind; and Heaven has marked thee with a diſtinction infinitely preferable to to all the enſignia of royalty —*the exterior of an honeſt man.*

In the entry, it may be proper to obſerve that it will be as much for thy convenience as for mine, to forget but a few moments where and what thou art. I aſk nothing more to the ſucceſs of my propoſal. The ſycophants and ſpaniels who fawn, uncover, and kneel

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in thy preſence, may ſometimes influence thee to think thyſelf more than man, while the invidious and leſs ſucceſsful rivals of thy favour, would have us believe thee to be leſs. For my part, I wiſh to find thee only in the full and liberal exerciſe of all thoſe powers and faculties, which God has given thee, with thine ears unoccupied, thy heart unbiaſſed, and thy mind open to conviction.

I muſt be free to conſider thee ſimply as one of the brethren and friends, which would to God thou wert. This idea will be no degradation of thee, and will, beſides, give a looſe to my whole heart, which in truth is as full of affection for thee and thine, as thou can'ſt

wiſh. Truſt me, it will be no blot on the annals of thy reign, when both of us are reclaimed by our mother earth, that a poor, obſcure Quaker had the honeſty, amidſt the tumult of the people, to lift up his voice from afar; and that the greateſt of Kings, by deigning him a hearing, ſhewed himſelf alſo to be amongſt the beſt of men.

As highly as thou art exalted above thy fellow creatures, it becomes thee to underſtand a little of their minds. Providence, as thou well knoweſt, hath placed thee on an eminence to watch the intereſt of others with ſympathy and tenderneſs, not to look down upon any with indifference or contempt; and it is not leſs happy for thee than

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for them, that thou art ſo deeply concerned in their ſentiments. Thou mighteſt, otherwiſe, like many unfortunate princes of immortal infamy, have precipitated thyſelf into immediate wretchedneſs and laſting diſgrace; but whilſt thy only glory is in the love and loyalty of a populous, powerful, and undivided kingdom, while thy greatneſs is their happineſs, and their liberties the ſole object of all thy miniſtrations, the crown ſhall flouriſh on thy head and deſcend with honour to thy ſon.

It deſerves to be engraven on thy heart, as the firſt and beſt of all maxims, *that our civil and religious privileges are the only ſtaple pillars of thy*

throne, and that our proſperity is thy ſole ſecurity. Thou art to us what the head is to the body, and haſt all the reaſon in the world to ſuſpect thyſelf, whenever not ſenſibly affected with our minuteſt complaints.

Thou can'ſt not, therefore, in the preſent critical poſture of affairs, be indifferent to our opinions. It is well known how rudely and roundly thou and thy ſervants are cenſured, for carrying on a bloody and expenſive war againſt the *Friends*, and others in America. Far be it from one of the ſuffering, perſecuted, and depreſſed brethren, to join the children of this world in waging their intemperate tongues againſt the Lord's annointed. Nor have

I the vanity to expect that from thee which thou haſt denied to thouſands: much leſs that my advice ſhould be followed in oppoſition to that of thy parliament and privy council. I am old enough to know what influence the voice of a private individual generally has on thoſe in a publick ſtation; but, whatever ſhould be the conſequence, thou ſhalt moſt certainly hear from me, what thou never didſt, nor ever can hear from ſuch as have an intereſt in deceiving thee

LETTER II.

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OUR principles are all of the peaceable and paſſive kind, and thou mayeſt be ſure, we ſhall not beſeech thee to proſecute, but to put an end to the war. And yet, I confeſs myſelf ſick to the ſoul of the common topics that are ſo frequently and unſucceſsfully urged to produce this meaſure.

Well might I argue the matter with thee, from every view of the *true chriſtian*

chriſtian divinity which thou canſt take; and I am told thou art not above conſulting the oracles of Heaven, while many of thy meaneſt ſervants and ſubjects are ſhamefully wallowing, amidſt all the wantonneſs and luxury of the times. This happy trait in thy character, is what chiefly encourages me to proceed, as it is an evidence that thou muſt be in poſſeſſion of many truths to which I ſhall have frequent occaſion to appeal.

Thou canſt not but know, that the Author of Chriſtianity had no diſpoſitions but ſuch as were meek and lowly; that his manners and actions were all merciful and gentle, and that his genuine diſciples ſhould endeavour,

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at leaſt, to live the ſame harmleſs and inoffenſive life that he did. All our aim is to copy his example—What he was we are—The weapons of his warfare were not carnal, and neither are ours—We defend not ourſelves with arms becauſe he did not—We ſubmit to be perſecuted becauſe he did—We were denied to the world becauſe he was—We ſuffer with humility and patience as he hath taught us—We are willing to lay down our lives at whatever time, and in whatever manner, he commands us.—Should he permit us to be inſulted or ſlain by human cruelty, it matters not to us in what way we relinquiſh life and paſs to immortality.

Revenge

Revenge is natural and dear to the human heart, but truth mortifies and tames our paſſions. We dare not ſet up our own wills, fretting and fuming as they often are, in oppoſition to his who can look the world into nothing, and by one myſterious touch of that hand which wields the planets in their ſpheres, arreſt the fury of nations. We chearfully forgoe the indulgence of every malignant propenſity and inclination, from a ſolid conviction, that it becomes not us to retaliate injuries; that we ought to love our enemies, and that vengeance belongs to Heaven. Thus we do not, like others, return evil for evil, but even pray for ſuch as deſpitefully uſe us; and, in this manner,

ner, we leave a teſtimony of our innocence in the hearts of thoſe who affect to ridicule our principles.

Indeed the *Friends* make it their buſineſs to live, without giving offence to God or man. We regularly aſſemble together from motives of the pureſt love. Then we exhort one another to fidelity and uniformity in the practice of true piety and univerſal benevolence. Thus it is that we exhibit to the world, a living and conſpicuous inſtance, how far good principles, ſteadfaſtly believed, and felt, are productive of the beſt diſpoſitions, and contribute at once to the happineſs of individuals, and the welfare of ſociety.

To us and our Connections, thou haſt many and great obligations. We never conteſt any of thy meaſures, nor, though exerted againſt ourſelves in a ſingle particular, diſpute thy power, or once put any of thy officers to the leaſt inconvenience in executing, however detrimental to our own intereſt, thy minuteſt commands. We uniformly ſet an open and honourable example of loyalty and ſubjection to all thy people, about, above, and beneath us, obey thy laws, pay thy taxes, and acknowledge thy ſovereignty with a conſcious punctuality and gratitude.

So that when we pray, as we often and fervently do, that thou, King as thou

thou art, wert even as one of us, in reſpect of religious principles, thou art then in poſſeſſion of our beſt and moſt ſacred wiſhes. Our hearts can deſire thee nothing better, nothing worthier, than an underſtanding thus filled and purified with that internal and ſpiritual light for which we relinquiſh all that a carnal world can give, or a carnal mind enjoy.

Not that we have the leaſt deſign on the infinite number of poſts, places, or penſions, that are at thy diſpoſal. Our ambition for thy ſoul's welfare is the natural conſequence of our benevolence. We have no plot to facilitate, no friends to ſerve, no intereſt at ſtake, but that of all mankind. Thy converſion

verſion may, perchance, be adopted by providence as the means of increaſing the number of the faithful, and we truſt our ſpiritual joy ſhall abound with the common ſalvation.

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LETTER III.

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THOU haſt ſeen in my laſt, what the Brethren are, or at leaſt what the principles they profeſs ought to make them: not that theſe principles have their full effect on every character among us. We pretend no more to the excluſion of hypocriſy than others. It is a vice of the heart, which we leave with him who ſearches it. Our ſociety, like thoſe around us, is ſtill acceſſible to the dæmon of diſſimula-

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tion; but the diſcipline we adopt is ſo rigid and impartial, that, ſingular as it may ſeem, inſincerity with us has no temptation.

Do but contraſt now, theſe ſentiments with thoſe of the world at large; weigh our religious character in the ſcale with that of others, and judge impartially for thyſelf. We have at leaſt a title to be heard on their ſubject. They are often heard on ours. Though our characteriſtic gravity ſhould even relax a little in the contemplation of an object ſo riſible, it is but laughing at thoſe who have often laughed at us.

Doſt thou never wonder what the primitive Chriſtians would think now of their ſyſtem, were they to look back from the dead, and once more behold it thus vamped up in all its preſent faſhionable finery? How different the fortune of the twelve apoſtles from that of the biſhops of England! The eſtabliſhed religion of this country, I am certain, is, in general, quite another thing than theirs, and produces very oppoſite effects. A mere nominal profeſſion at ſome ſeaſon or another, on the reception of ſome lucrative employment, or perchance the marriage ceremony, is ſtill the cant of the times; and yet what are many of thy nobility, thy commoners, almoſt all the men of learning

learning and buſineſs in the kingdom, but thoughtleſs profligates, affected Deiſts, or ſyſtematic Atheiſts.

The great deſign of Heaven, in the promulgation of the goſpel, was, to purify the paſſions, and exalt the character of man. The principles it exhibits are all calculated to reform the world: they naturally diveſt the heart of ſelfiſhneſs, inſpire diſpoſitions of candour and truth, preſerve the regular ſubordination of ſociety, and eſtabliſh peace on the earth. Where theſe effects are but partially felt, the cauſe that ſhould produce them is either changed or thwarted in its operations.

Try, then, as religion enjoins, the tree by its fruit. Put on the habit of a Jew, frequent the Exchange, and be ſatisfied with thine own eyes that the very ſpirit of traffick, in direct oppoſition to that of the goſpel, is to get as much for as little as poſſible, to dupe the ſimple and unſuſpecting, and to embrace every opportunity of making a good bargain at another's expence: for honeſty is full as rare among tradeſmen, as generoſity among lawyers, piety among prieſts, or candour among courtiers. Ideas of *meum* and *tuum* are totally abſorbed in the proſpect of accumulating an independent fortune. How many raſcals of this kidney, with the moſt farcical ſadneſs of countenance imaginable,

imaginable, can boaſt of their probity, veracity and honour, who have not a wiſh but to be rich, nor other conceptions of right and wrong than intereſt alone ſuggeſts.

In ſuch a violent and univerſal ſcramble for affluence and importance, as at preſent leſs or more inflames and involves all ſorts of characters, what ſtratagems and manœuvres are not daily contrived to promote private, independent of publick utility! Such minds feel not the moſt ſacred obligations either of ſociety or conſcience: nor are they ſubject to any reſtriction whatever which does not materially and immediately affect their property.

With the ſeveral theatres of political ſquabble and intrigue, I pretend but little acquaintance. In thy room I would wear a maſk, as every other publick actor does, and frequent thoſe ſcenes moſt, where mankind are beſt ſeen. In thy preſent circle, every one that comes under thy obſervation has an intereſt in flattering thee. Thine ears are accuſtomed to no ſounds but thoſe of adulation, thine eyes to no ſights but thoſe of impenetrable diſguiſe. How diametrically oppoſite and equally hollow the pretenſions of both parties that daily ſurround the throne! Whatever they ſay or do is problematical: nor is there another clue to their hearts than by reading them backwards, as

witches are ſaid to read their prayers. Their emblem is the motion of a crab, as their true character is always apparent from their ſolicitude to hide it. They unite the ſuppleneſs of a ſpaniel with the loquacity of a magpie, the officiouſneſs of a jackall with the ſelfiſhneſs of a cur, and the cunning of a fox with the ſtupidity of an aſs. Their minds are the natural ſeat of ſlavery and dependence, and their bodies the mere ſpectacles of ceremony and ſhew. They lift not an eye, move not a ſtep, draw not a breath, but at thy beck, whoſe favour is the higheſt object of their ſolicitude, and the very circumference of their circle. To gain this deareſt of all acquiſitions to an inflated mind, they trudge through the

meaneſt intrigues, ſound the labyrinths of faction, and are mere utenſils in the hands of every menial and abject male or female that baſks in the meridian to which they aſpire. Thus foppery and affectation gild their manners, deceit lurks under the ſimper of an inſidious countenance, and flattery, like the poiſon of aſps, wantons on their tongue. And what can be learned of nature and life from ſuch a pitiful tribe of inſignificants? Are they not eternally abſorbed in the puerilities of faſhion, and the conſtant victim of every foreign and predominant extravagance? How can they be faithful to thee, while their promiſes are falſe to every body elſe, or once tell thee what they think, who invariably ſpeak a language foreign

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to their own hearts? They know if they ſhould, but in a ſingle inſtance, relax their tone, the ſecret is out, and their expectations blaſted. In ſhort, whatever they ſhould be in thy opinion, they are only known to ſtrangers, by the complaiſance they affect, the conſequence they boaſt, the flexibility of their geſtures, their vacant faces, meagre looks, and faded complexions. Generoſity, patriotiſm, and the moſt ſplendid virtues of a public and inviolable attachment to the welfare of their country, are derided with merriment, or reprobated with ſcorn. Thoſe of them who are *out* of thy favour inſult the miniſtry merely becauſe they cannot ſupplant them; and ſuch as are *in*, ſeem intent only, as the proverb goes,

goes, on *making hay while the ſun ſhines.*

Could religion now own ſuch creatures as theſe for her friends without the moſt manifeſt confuſion? And which of her modern diſciples have a fairer claim to her attention? The truth is, her genius and theirs are totally incompatible and repugnant. She deſcends from Heaven, exalts to Heaven, and it is Heaven wherever ſhe is; but they burrow in the earth as literally as a mole, and glut themſelves with her poor, periſhing comforts, as greedily as the tiger does with the blood of his prey.

Men

Men of the world, as fond as they ſeem of her, would all be rich, though than riches nothing can be more deſtructive of her power and ſpirit. Wealth is the parent of luxury, and luxury of every crime that blackens the annals of humanity. In this ſoil malignity takes root, blaſts the beſt ſentiments of the heart, and debilitates the underſtanding with erroneous conceptions of things and irreſolute plans of action.

Power, however prepoſterous it appears, in union with piety, is every where coveted and extended with a phrenzy and madneſs which fill the little circle of the leaſt conſequential among

among the ſons of pride with tyranny and oppreſſion: and the humility recommended by the goſpel, and ſo explicitly exemplified in the life of its author, is a mere theoretical idea, which to practice would be to forfeit all credit with the world. This, by the way, is a ſtrong preſumption that ambition, as ſome ancient ſages were wont to obſerve, is a draught much too intoxicating for human brains.

Moſt of all the fatal attractions of pleaſure, as ſhe flounces it abroad in all her adventitious charms, are leaſt conſonant to the heavenly delicacy of religion, and yet, perhaps, do more miſchief among her votaries than any other thing. *Profligacy* of one kind

or

or other is ſeldom ſupplanted, where men have the means of indulgence; but by *Avarice*, which, of two very bad habits, is infinitely the worſt. So that the Religioniſts of our day generally plunge headlong among the delicacies and delights of life, without, as it would ſeem, once ſuſpecting at what a vaſt expence ſuch frivolous inſipidities are purchaſed.

Take but a general view of thoſe who have adopted this plauſible ſyſtem of convenience moſt thoroughly. They affect to know more, but do no better than others; have not the eſſence but the name; and, for a warm heart, ſubſtitute only a blazing profeſſion.

Magiſtrates,

Magiſtrates, for the moſt part among them, have evidently nothing ſo little at heart as the honour of law and the good of the public. How abſurd, that they ſhould rule others who have no command of themſelves! And what ſhall Engliſhmen come to at laſt, while they receive the law from ſuch as are ſtill in ſlavery to the partial dictates of a narrow heart!

How ſtrangely and univerſally do parents pervert the tempers of their children; as if indulging them in the worſt habits were the beſt expreſſion of their tenderneſs. If they can but make them ſhine, they ſeem perfectly indifferent what they are. Modern

education

education is but the poliſh of a caſk that hides an unpoliſhed diamond : and who or where is that father that does not diſcover more anxiety to leave his offspring in poſſeſſion of large fortunes and fine proſpects, than good principles and virtuous diſpoſitions ?

Maſters, fooliſh and fantaſtic as it may appear to poſterity, miſtake the exerciſe of humanity to thoſe beneath them, for a ſanction to their habits of indolence and depravity, pamper their appetites with every faſhionable indulgence, and, by the choice they make, and the confidence they place, evidently prefer in moſt menial dependants, a genius for knavery and intrigue, to probity, piety, and gratitude.

Servants

Servants mimic thoſe on whom they live, with ſingular dexterity and adroitneſs, in all the groſſeſt enormities in *ton*. They obey their maſters not from principle but conſtraint, and obſerve, minutely, not the dictates of a tender upright conſcience, but thoſe of the moſt brutiſh ignorance and inſenſibility, of the moſt hardened and habitual impudence, of the moſt ſhocking and profligate rudeneſs.

Thus ſocial and domeſtic life, where Religion was wont to reſort in all her choiceſt graces and pureſt perfections, is now degraded with crimes, embroiled with troubles, and darkened with ſorrow. Is not matrimony from being

the ſacred aſylum of love, become a ſcene of open hoſtility and mutual depredation? The conjugal virtues of the throne, examplary as they are, have not been able to repair the violated rites of Hymen. Huſbands will take liberties, and the antlers, that ſo frequently decorate their brows, is a proof that wives are ſeldom dilatory in accompliſhing their vengeance.

Is it not then aſtoniſhing that people who lead ſuch lives ſhould yet have the affrontery to profeſs religion? Haſt thou not fixed the charge of rebellion on thy ſubjects in America for wantonly rejecting thy authority? What could we think of their loyalty at home, who inſidiouſly took part with the

enemies of their country abroad? Is he a dutiful ſon merely becauſe he ſays ſo, though every thing he does is in flat contradiction to his father's will?

Apply this reaſoning to the religion of the multitude, and it cannot but ſtrike thee as falſe and nugatory. Muſt not its diſciples be impoſtors while it inflames inſtead of correcting their paſſions, and, far from retrenching their appetites, adminiſters to their indulgence? Thus Chriſtianity becomes an engine for accompliſhing the very ends for the obſtruction of which, it was originally intended.

How

How different is the ſyſtem of thinking and acting which the goſpel exhibits! It formally proſcribes whatever is moſt apt to intoxicate the heart, and put the mind in diſorder. Human nature can only be happy in mental harmony, temperance, and moderation. To theſe habits all evangelical injunctions have the ſtrongeſt tendency. But who obſerves them? Is not the *world's dread laugh* uniformly in the very face of decency? A man of faſhion would bluſh to be ſuſpected of humanity, piety, or charity, but not to be detected in ſeducing an innocent girl, or debauching the wife of a friend. How many are there to whom we durſt not give the lie, but at the

riſk of our lives, whoſe flagitious manners have, notwithſtanding, rendered *Engliſh honour a ſtanding jeſt!*

Obſerve but the animals around thee with attention! In what does their life conſiſt? When may they be denominated moſt happy? Do not our own feelings ſufficiently anſwer the queſtion? Are not they and we too, moſt comfortable in general, when moſt healthy? and is not this ſenſation in both produced by wholeſome aliment and proper exerciſe?

Nature is nearly the ſame in her moral as in her material operations. Perpetual motion, of one kind or other, is peculiarly characteriſtic of all our moral

moral powers. Now, all the difference between ſpiritual life and ſpiritual death, lies in the objects about which our hearts are chiefly ſolicitous. So that if the world abſorbs or minds and exhauſts our affections, with the world we muſt die. And among all that variety of things and beings which, in the preſent viſionary and faſcinating ſcene, dazzles and allures our ſenſes, there is not one which is not either dying or dead.

What title then have they to the character of religious, to the dignity of the divine life, or the hopes of a happy immortality, who are conſtantly and with avidity raking and huddling together this contemptible and corrupting traſh? The moſt ſtupid reptile that

 crawls,

crawls, has yet ſenſe enough to diſtinguiſh its food from poiſon. Modern Chriſtians only, have the ſottiſh inſenſibility to glut their hearts, and waſte their affections, on what muſt ultimately deſtroy their ſouls as inevitably as a doſe of arſenick would their bodies.

This then is the religion of the world at large, and more eſpecially of thoſe with whom thou art moſt intimately connected. And were I not firmly perſuaded that religion muſt be ſomething eſſentially diſtinct and ſuperior, I had not ſaid a word about it. But thou art not a ſceptic, nor a bigot, I hope, though *Junius* would have us believe the contrary. Thy temper, it is well known, and all thy prejudices are

on

on the ſide of piety; and all my convictions of the ſimple truth urge me ſtrongly to aſſure thee, that this is a ſerious matter; that thou haſt a maſter in Heaven who will deal as plainly by thee as by the meaneſt of thy ſubjects, and that the time may not be very diſtant when things ſhall ſtrike thee in a very different light.

Such is the ſtyle, impertinent as it may be thought, in which *Barclay*, of celebrated memory, once addreſſed as profligate a prince, as ever ſat upon the throne. Fortunately for me, I have not the ſame licentious habits to encounter that he had. May I not, therefore, preſume, that, to a mind like thine, ſuch conſiderations as theſe cannot be alto-

gether uſeleſs? In this confidence I leave thee, for the preſent, to thy own reflections, with ſuch an adage as deſerves the beſt place in thy heart—*He that walketh with the wiſe ſhall be wiſe; but a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed.*

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LETTER IV.

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FROM ſuch a ſyſtem of religion as I have now deſcribed, the tranſition to politics is natural, and in ſome ſort neceſſary. The conſtitution of England is evidently a theocracy, conſiſting of powers and authorities, as well ſacred as civil. It becomes thee to be equally acquainted with both, as I doubt not thou art: and, having fixed thy attention a little on the one, the preſent criſis will juſtify me

me in dilating rather more minutely ſome particulars of the other.

The diſtance of princes from their ſubjects is one of the greateſt misfortures connected with their elevated ſituations. They ſeldom have an opportunity of knowing the public ſentiments ſufficiently. They are much too high to hear the growling of thoſe beneath them. And popular indignation, like a ſudden ſtorm, ſometimes burſts on their heads when they but little expect it.

The characteriſtic turbulence of the Engliſh nation is well known, and they have ſeldom been in a ferment more threatening and general than now.

What

What though party altercations ſeems to abate, the flame may be ſmothered, but is not extinguiſhed. The pulſe of a party does not always beat with the general humour: the ſpirit of the people muſt be gathered from a much more infallible criterion; they may ſeem ſilent while they are but ſulky, and ſatisfied while their paſſions are only under a kind of temporary ſuſpenſe; and moſt undoubtedly thy unhappineſs will always be in proportion to their complaints.

Thy acceſſion to the throne of thy progenitors is, perhaps, one of the moſt ſplendid novelties in the annals of the Britiſh empire. Thou wert then all that our fondeſt wiſhes could form

of

of dignity tempered with humanity, and majeſty exalted by inherent goodneſs. Thou hadſt thy birth and education at home, in the boſom and the eye of the very people thou wert deſtined to govern. Their manners, their principles, their genius, their habits, their rights are thine by legitimate inheritance. They beheld in their young king the ſpirit of the royal prerogative, ſoftened with all the ſweetneſs and affability of the warmeſt fraternal affection. Young and old, and male and female, ſaw thee aſcend the chair of ſtate with a generous and patriotic extacy. The univerſal ſhouts of popularity that announced thee King, were the natural expreſſions of that gratitude which was then the general ſentiment

ment of the kingdom. Theſe were ſo many liberal pledges of thy peoples' confidence, and the moſt authentic earneſts they could beſtow of their future fidelity and attachment. Thy throne was literally in their hearts. Their looks, their actions, the generous rapture they every where felt and expreſſed, proclaimed thee the man of their choice. On that occaſion, when their affections were full and undiſguiſed, doubt not but the ſurrender they made of their lives and properties, dear as it may ſeem, to ſupport the delegated guardian of the ſtate, was genuine and unreſerved. The royal declaration was alſo received with univerſal credit. Indeed the reciprocal faith of prince and people did honour

to

to that memorable event. Their allegience was the affectionate gratulation of a happy people: thy cordial acquiescence in the terms prescribed thee by the constitution, an assurance to them and their children that thou art worthy to reign.

This era was peculiarly distinguished by the prosperity as well as the approbation of thy people. Victory, the infallible consequence of unanimity in council, and intrepidity in conduct, attended our arms by sea and land. The supremacy of the British flag was every where acknowledged. Both ends of the globe witnessed and felt our success. The whole continent of North America, rescued from despotism, be-

came ours by right of conqueſt. Our great national rival lay humbled and bleeding at our feet. Often had we ſeen this haughty and preſumptuous adverſary bowing her head to ſuperior proweſs, but never till then an object of pity. Neighbouring nations, jealous of our glory, beheld our increaſe of territory with aſtoniſhment; but they durſt not avow their diſlike. Our ſpirits were too high, and too violent to brook affronts. They knew us better than to thwart us while out of humour, and had recourſe to a more plauſible expedient: they congratulated the nation on every acquiſition we gained: they openly courted our alliance: they uniformly treated the minuteſt

nuteſt reſolution of the cabinet with delicacy and reſpect.

Every branch of commerce was then in the zenith of perfection. Our various manufactories were in all the moſt flouriſhing condition. Mechanics, handicrafts, and labourers, were neither idle nor ill payed. The Eaſt and Weſt poured their reſpective ſtores into our lap. The very captures taken ſince the commencement of the war, ſhew the magnitude of the American trade. The truth is, almoſt every port in Great Britain and Ireland was crouded with their ſhips: and there is hardly an inland town in the whole empire to which the wealth, produced by ſuch an exten-

ſive traffic with our colonies in foreign parts, did not liberally circulate.

The happy conſequence of all this, was internal plenty and tranquility, the moſt cordial unanimity among ourſelves, and a punctual obedience to the laws. The ties and ſanctions of ſociety were ſtill binding on the poor, and public profligacy had not yet run riot among the rich. A ſenſe of decency preferred the chaſtity of our women in high life, and every valuable domeſtic accompliſhment diſtinguiſhed many of thoſe in inferior ſtations. Matrimonial infidelity, at leaſt, was not the tone of the times. Bankruptcy, the moſt capital improvement in the modern art of ſwindling, was not then reduced to a

ſyſtem; nor had private credit begun to fluctuate. The mercantile world had been hitherto unmoleſted with thoſe dreadful convulſions which at preſent threaten its diſſolution: manlineſs and ſobriety, not effeminacy and diſſipation, were the well-known characteriſtics of the national ſpirit. We were neither frivolous at home nor inſignificant abroad. Poſſeſſed of independance, our induſtry brought us wealth from every country in the univerſe, and our fleet kept all aggreſſors at a diſtance. There never was a period in which the inflammatory and miſchievous violence of different factions made leſs noiſe. The colonies, happily rid of every wonted annoyance, were contented: our armies enjoyed the fruits of their toil in the

boſom of their friends: merchants of all denominations were occupied in accumulating the largeſt fortunes: every department of buſineſs was proſperous, and, what is moſt of all to our preſent purpoſe, adminiſtration was reſpectable and popular.

But theſe times are gone; and, like the delicious fictions of the night, we labour in vain to recal them. Nor is this the only inſtance in human life when paſt realities vaniſh into preſent phantoms. They are, nevertheleſs, of the ſame importance in our general hiſtory, that charts are in navigation: they ſhew thoſe at the helm how to ſteer the bark of ſtate into the ſafeſt harbour: with theſe in their view, it will be almoſt

impoſſible to founder; but we are undone the moment they eſcape them. For nations, like individuals, are incapable of all future improvement whenever they forget either what they once were, or what they might yet become. To remind thee of this great truth, and, if poſſible, to ſtamp it on thy heart, I have wrote to thee in the deepeſt ſincerity of mine. May the bleſſing of God Almighty attend thy peruſal of it, and grant thee a ſufficient quantity of patience to bear a relation which I muſt now make in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.

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LETTER V.

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TWO millions of thy free-born ſubjects have taken up arms againſt thy government, and at ſuch an immenſe diſtance as renders it impoſſible to fight them on equal terms. Their prodigious extent of country, the fertility of its ſoil, the value of its productions, the number and ſimplicity of its inhabitants, are all in their favour. Their commerce is proportionable to their other advantages. It pro-

vides them in the very beſt markets for all their vendible commodities. It facilitates their acquaintance and connection with the various powers of Europe. It enriches the new with all the arts, ſciences, and experience of the old world. It apprizes them of thoſe movements and combinations among the different maritime powers that have been ſo frequently formidable to that part of the globe. And, what is more than all, it trains up the natives to naval affairs. Nor is it in the power of our fleet to divert them from this important object. Their coaſts are too extenſive to be ſtrictly guarded. To our aſſiduous neighbours their trade is a moſt valuable acquiſition; and it is perfectly chimerical to think of preventing

venting their ſupplies from Europe while they are able to make an adequate return.

So long as theſe and ſimilar reſources laſt, the war muſt unavoidably be protracted. The rebels, like every people under Heaven, will improve in all the departments and adroitneſs of the military art, in proportion as they continue under arms. Their ſuppoſed conſtitutional cowardice was an idea that ought never to have been admitted. It was founded in the moſt contemptible ignorance of hiſtory and the human heart. The tempers and ſpirits of men undergo a ſlight variation from particular climates, the food they eat, and the habits they indulge. They are heavy

and volatile, athletic, and effeminate, from theſe cauſes operating to a certain degree. But art cannot make him a coward whom nature intended for a hero. Magnanimity and enterprize are traits in his character of which nothing can diveſt him. Man is evidently deſtined for dominion, and originally deſirous of acquiring it. This quality he poſſeſſes from the ſame powers that endowed his mind with the faculty of thinking, and his body with that of motion.

It cannot be denied that the Americans are as reſolute, and as brave as it is poſſible to be without diſcipline: and we begin to feel that this defect ceaſes of courſe. The truth is, their

veteran

veteran troops increaſe in proportion as ours decreaſe: ſo that the longer they continue in the field they muſt be the abler to keep it.

The expence of ſuch an army as we muſt have to oppoſe them, at ſuch a diſtance, under ſuch circumſtances, and for ſuch a time, is what the nation cannot long at leaſt afford. Our taxations are already enormous: our meat, our cloathing, the very light of Heaven is even in this free country under a heavy impoſt; and it ſeems particularly hard that our money ſhould be expended in annihilating the very means of acquiring it.

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LETTER VI.

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IT would be abſurd and ridiculous to ſuppoſe we can be ever ſo unanimous among ourſelves in quelling a rebellion in which many of our brethren are unavoidably engaged, as in waging open war with any of our natural and hereditary enemies. The truth is, our diſpute with the colonies is a queſtion in which the nation has been long and tenaciouſly divided. The firſt characters in the kingdom for hiſtorical

rical ſcience, and political ſagacity, have taken ſides and remain inflexible: and, ſo far as human authority can influence the judgment of mankind, it ſeems hard to decide either againſt a Mansfield, a Germaine, or a North, on the one hand; or a Chatham, a Shelburne, and a Camden, on the other.

It is at once our happineſs and diſtinction, as a free and independent people, that the meaneſt among us know the full extent of their birthright; that in every thing compatible with the welfare of ſociety, they are their own maſters, and that they know ſufficiently what thoſe priviledges are which the law ſecures them. The liberty of adopting what ſide they

pleaſe

pleaſe in every political diſquiſition, is none of the leaſt of theſe. Indeed freedom of enquiry is among the laſt of their rights they will give up. It coſt our anceſtors dear, and it were ſacrilege in their poſterity to part with it. Licentiouſneſs has often aſſumed, and will ſtill aſſume its name; but the very abuſe of it demonſtrates it's value: for it has always been, and will be to the end of the world, the fate of human nature to abuſe only the beſt things.

Accordingly there are not wanting of all ranks, from the higheſt peers, to the meaneſt mechanics in the nation, who have uniformly ſupported the claims of the colonies, who have boldly reprobated every ſtep of adminiſtration

to reduce them, and who avowedly tax thee and thy ſervants with deliberately adopting ſchemes of deſpotiſm which they gravely allege you meant after making the experiment abroad to put in execution at home. Of all ſuch deſigns I ſhall ever be among the firſt to acquit thee. It is ſufficiently alarming that ſubjects dare entertain ſo prepoſterous an idea of a Britiſh prince. Wiſe men apprehend nothing but from their apprehenſions. This is the diſeaſe that is moſt likely to prove mortal. For who can tell where political delirium may end. Have not the greateſt revolutions been ſometimes the conſequence of the ſmalleſt beginnings? A flame thus trivial at its firſt breaking out, has not unfrequently terminated in a general

general conflagration. The intemperate tongue of *Oppoſition* is almoſt mute for the preſent; but they only breathe a little to gather freſh ſpirits, and return to the charge with redoubled extravagance. They but wait the iſſue of this campaign to blow another and fairer alarm than ever. It appears to them, as well as to others, that nothing deciſive can be accompliſhed in ſo ſhort a time; that our martial movements are exceedingly unpromiſing, and that our troops, as might well have been expected, have done little more than taught the rebels to beat them. Theſe conjectures are juſt as probable to them as they can be improbable to you: conſequently their declamation will be no more without poignancy, as their aſſertions

tions muſt be henceforth founded in fact: ſo that the enſuing ſeſſion of parliament is likely to prove one of the hotteſt that ever happened in the preſent reign. The landed intereſt have hitherto given the officers of the crown unbounded credit for every plan they adopted, and every meaſure they purſued: but were they now to ſpeak out, they would tell, unanimouſly, that they were taught to look on the rebels as a divided body of miſguided people, without union among themſelves, without conduct in their leaders, without foreſight in their counſels, without property to ſupport the expence of a war, without courage to face diſciplined troops, and without reſources in caſe of a defeat. Now which of all theſe ideas has

has not been found to be falſe in fact? Is not the whole continent firmly united in maintaining the ſame great cauſe? Have they not, with one view, and with one conſent, liberally ſacrificed their lives and fortunes? Their Commander in chief has at leaſt done as much with irregular forces as man could do. Not one of their deliberations have hitherto proved abortive. The arrears of the army have, to this moment, been punctually diſcharged. The many lives we have already loſt in the cauſe is but too ſtrong a proof that they are not mere poltroons. And, though they have been beaten in more places than one, are they not ſtill firſt in the field?

Theſe

Theſe are things which begin to make a deep impreſſion even on many of thy beſt friends. They ſee well where the weight of the burden muſt lie: and, however much inclined to juſtify the meaſures of adminiſtration, are heartily weary of ſharing the expence. Thouſands can ſpare abundance of ſpeculation who would not purchaſe the ſalvation of their country at the price of a ſixpence. And ſo long as the miniſter needs arguments only, they liſt themſelves under his banners, and defend him at all hazards: but the moment he would touch their pockets, he loſes their ſuffrage, and, though formerly extolled for his wiſdom, is

immediately traduced and reproached with every ſpecies of extravagance.

Nor are theſe the only people who have reaſon to be tired of the preſent war. It affects every article of profit and loſs in this country moſt ſenſibly. Merchants, mechanics, manufacturers, farmers, and labourers, are all ſharers in the common calamity. And I have the beſt acceſs to know, that juſt now there is a ſhocking ſtagnation even in the mere *retail* of buſineſs. Nor is it leſs ominous in the trading ſyſtem than in the natural body, when the malignity of the diſeaſe effects the extremeſt members. How many a fair and flouriſhing trader ſince this quarrel began has been reduced from opulence and inde-

independence, to a ſtate of the moſt abject poverty and wretchedneſs! Implacable as the hearts of thy miniſters may be, Heaven has endowed thee with a ſenſible and feeling one. The moſt indiſpenſable obligation of a rational and moral being perhaps is humanity, and the royal mind we have often heard is no ſtranger to its tendereſt emotions: but does it not become a maſter to regard the ſufferings of his ſervants, and eſpecially a father thoſe of his own offspring with the keeneſt ſolicitude and deepeſt concern. The relation that ſubſiſts between thee and thy ſubjects at leaſt is equally ſtrong and intereſting.

Liſten to thy own underſtanding, conſult thy own feelings, indulge but once the natural ſuggeſtions of thy own heart, and I will vouch for thee, popular miſery is no longer either heard or ſeen with indifference. Reprobate every ſuſpicious medium of correſpondence with thy people, make uſe of thy own ſenſes and conceptions in preference to thoſe of others, and their grievances ſhall inſenſibly become thy grievances, their complaints thy complaints, and all their intereſts thine.

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LETTER VII.

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THY Courtiers, we all know, are greatly chagrined at the complaints of the people. And it muſt be confeſſed much rudeneſs, outrage, and uncourtly remonſtrances have been made. But men ought not to be taken too ſhort when heated. Their language was indelicate, but not unnatural in their ſituation. They felt inconveniencies which their rulers could not feel: their intereſts were deeply affected, and

it was time, while yet their fate was not inevitable, to demand a redreſs of their wrongs.

The moſt delicate branch of the princely prerogative is, to decide with judgment and accuracy between the lawleſs clamours of faction and the ſiniſter ſuggeſtions of intereſt. The former is the tool of deſigning men by which their plots are often faſhioned into action, and by which the poor, unthinking vulgar are ſometimes hurried on to ſedition and rebellion. Indeed! what is all the mighty noiſe and uproar which of late years has ſo inſolently aſſumed the name, and publicly ſtalked in the gayeſt habiliments of pa-

patriotiſm, but the ſelfiſh and impotent rage of a few out-witted jugglers behind the ſcene? They had not another game to play; and fools all the world over, would rather be tumultuous than ſilent. Still, however, ſuch a general outcry could not originate from nothing. The violent declamations of knaves always account for themſelves, but honeſt men are ſeldom heard, ſave in caſes of extremity: conſequently there muſt have been miſmanagement ſome where. People might, and in many inſtances undoubtedly did, magnify, but they could not create.

Thy ſervants only have an intereſt in deceiving thee. It is not in human nature to relinquiſh lucrative places

without reluctance. To this idea they naturally ſacrifice every thing. To many of them it has, doubtleſs, been long an object of the greateſt ſolicitude: and who can tell with what avidity the fibres of a mercenary heart cling and twiſt about what correſponds ſo well with its inmoſt deſires! Guided by circumſtances thus ſelfiſh and dependent, they dare not repreſent matters fairly: they want greatneſs of mind to overlook whatever intercepts their view of the public good; or even to prefer it when perceived. Coſt what it will, their maſter muſt be ſedulouſly kept out of the ſecret: he muſt only be allowed a peep of things in their faireſt colours; as if the dark, forboding aſpect of reality were big with ſomething too

dreadful

dreadful for the inſpection of royalty. Hence the murmurs of the people are either prevented reaching the throne, or miſconſtructed, when they do. The humbleſt ſupplication is miſtaken for the ravings of petulance, and the indignant language of oppreſſion for that of ſedition and outrage.

In truth, Favourites have always impoſed on their maſter, and abuſed him in proportion to his credulity. And this is not an age to expect any extraordinary exertions of virtue; eſpecially from ſuch as are moſt expoſed to the influence of vice. The preſent miniſtry are compoſed of characters at leaſt not worſe than others, but the times require them to be much better. Diſſo-

luteneſs

luteneſs never deluges ſociety with ſuch a full tide of iniquity, as when it begins at the great. This is literally opening the flood-gates, and laying the lower grounds totally under water. And while any of the moſt depraved of their ſpecies continue the ſole caterers of thy knowledge, thy conceptions of our internal condition muſt be always partial, and frequently falſe. Their firſt maxim is, either to diſguiſe or ſuppreſs every untoward circumſtance: the ſecond, to hold up every one who condemns their meaſures as diſaffected to thy perſon and government; and their third, to attribute every popular murmur or complaint to the invidious artifices of their rivals. And it cannot be concealed that the wretched manœuvres

of

of oppoſition, for ſome time paſt, have been ſo unſkilfully managed, as to give their ſyſtem a plauſibility which it could not otherwiſe poſſeſs. But woe unto them, and woe unto us, if by theſe means thy affections are torn from thy ſubjects. It is wonderful, notwithſtanding all their grievances, with what tenderneſs the very meaneſt of them ſtill think of thee and thine! And have they not ſome right to a corner in thy heart, whilſt thou, and all thou haſt, are in ſuch full poſſeſſion of theirs?

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LETTER VIII.

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IT is with infinite pleaſure we contemplate thee, as the patron of every ſcience that can poſſibly render the memory of the preſent reign illuſtrious. Not to mention the progreſs which almoſt all the fine arts have made under thy inſpection, thy aſſiduous attention to the utmoſt improvement of navigation and commerce, is peculiarly laudable, exemplary, and glorious!

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But ſuch individuals as are ſolely made up of externals, we generally find on trial the moſt worthleſs and contemptible. This idea is peculiarly appoſite to ſociety. What ſignifies it how large our empire is, how rich many of us are, how immenſe the public revenue becomes, while diſſoluteneſs, miſery and diſpair invade the lower ranks of mankind, and prey on the very entrails of the public. To all the wiſeſt and the beſt legiſlators, the morals and happineſs of their people have ever been an object of the moſt ſacred and inviolable regard. And every mode of government, every public purſuit, every general propenſion, that does not one way or other refer

to

to this capital concern, deſerves the moſt explicit and peremptory reprobation.

The admonitions of hiſtory to this important purpoſe are ſingularly appoſite and affecting. It is uſual to attribute the fall of empires to luxury; but luxury is only one of the laſt ſtages of their depravity; and we ſhall not be very wide of the truth, by conſidering Ambition as the parent of both. This is that bottomleſs gulph whence every ſpecies of profligacy tumbles in upon us in torrents perfectly irreſiſtible. Riches increaſe with power, and principles of probity weaken as commerce extends. Thus it would ſeem as if Providence had decreed, that domination

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over the perſons and properties of others ſhall periſh by the ſame means it is acquired; and that what exalted us in the laſt reign, may probably ruin us in this. Nothing is more ſtrongly inculcated by the whole annals of antiquity, than that the moſt flouriſhing ſtates declined the moment they began to graſp at foreign territory. It will hardly be controverted by the greateſt ſticklers for dominion, that lawleſs conqueſt ſeldom proves of any ſolid and permanent advantage to the conquerors. Some over-ruling Power ſtill blaſts the laurels of the victor, and ſecretly rifles his ill-gotten honours. And it is wiſely appointed. For why ſhould one man be happy in the wretchedneſs of another? So that princes who can be

dazzled with this moſt hollow, however ſplendid, of all ambitious projects, would do well to contemplate the fate of Charles XII. and Lewis XIV. Theſe two great men ſacrificed every thing to falſe ideas of glory. They bought a name to themſelves at the expence of their people's felicity; and the praiſe which their talents and virtues deſerve of poſterity, is loſt, in a juſt abhorence of their criminal rage for power and conqueſt.

Indeed, what are commonly called great national enterpriſes, are ſeldom any thing more than the laſt deſperate efforts of an emaciated conſtitution. Hence they operate on the public nearly as relaxing medicines do on the human body:

body: They break its ſpirit, unbrace its nerves, and exhauſt its vigour: The ruling paſſion of ſocieties has often as much need of diſcipline and reſtraint as that of individuals: Nor are we leſs governed by habit in company than alone. Thoſe habits therefore are only intitled to indulgence, which have the moſt immediate influence on the general welfare.

The rage of adventure becomes no ſooner epidemical, than all active induſtry is at an end: Exertion is unneceſſary while we can ſatisfy our deſires without it. The mind, thus inflamed with viſions of imaginary opulence and grandeur, is totally abſorbed in the idea of realizing them: Such is the paſſion

with which the hearts of our youth are fired as ſoon as they begin to feel. They inſtantly perceive that Britain is too narrow a ſcene for the full diſplay of their faculties. It has been told them, that others with parts much inferior to theirs have rapidly become great and reſpectable: Their ambition henceforward ſecludes every other object. About the means of acquiring it, they are not ſolicitous. Wealth is the game, and we think both honour and humanity well hazarded in queſt of it. Notwithſtanding all the depredations we have made on our fellow creatures in almoſt every corner of the univerſe, there is ſtill room for more. Plundering provinces, families, and individuals, where the natives are without

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protection, and unable themſelves to repel the lawleſs violence of their brutal invaders, is an ancient uſage which we have neither courage nor virtue enough either to abandon or proſcribe. We leave our country with a determination to be rich. The inclination is ſuch as we cannot relinquiſh but with life. Not all the dangers of a long and hazardous voyage; not all the diſeaſes of unwholeſome climates, not all the diſaſters to be encountered in our intercourſe with ſtrangers, nor any other inconvenience whatever, can diſpoſe us to abandon proſpects at once ſo dazzling to our fancies, and flattering to our wiſhes: And thus it is that men are ſo frequently the dupes of the moſt unworthy attachments.

We are reared from our infancy with a rooted averſion to all kinds of labour. Before we know what it is to ſuffer, our tempers are ruined by habits of effeminacy: The great difference between ancient and modern education is, that one braces and the other relaxes the mind. They know but little of life who conſider it in any other view than as a ſcene of trouble and hardſhips, and they are but ill prepared to withſtand its ſhocks who enter on it without a large ſhare of patience, ſome hardineſs, and much reſolution. Indolence is one of the moſt pernicious of all our bad habits, and uniformly the child of indulgence; and that mind is more allied to matter than ſpirit which

tends invariably to reſt. This, however, ſeems the prevailing humour of the riſing generation: The fathers of many have riſen from nothing to a ſtate of ſplendor and diſtinction; And their caſe affords their ſons a precedent ſufficiently recent and plauſible. Thus, whatever promiſes moſt wealth for the leaſt toil, is, of all other purſuits, the beſt adopted to their wiſhes. How many have gone out a great deal worſe than nothing, and returned in a very ſhort time in poſſeſſion of the moſt enormous ſums! And theſe have they not extorted by fraud or violence, or both from people who never wiſhed them wrong? In this manner what immenſe fortunes are daily made in the miſeries and misfortunes of the wretch-

ed : And good old England, with all her internal ſources of wealth and independance, is juſtly abhorred in the moſt diſtant extremities of the earth, as the moſt infamous of robbers. The opprobrium reflected on our national character by the atrocious tranſactions of unprincipled Adventurers in that quarter of the globe, is indelible and notorious. That inſatiable avidity for riches and luxury which prompts them to leave their country, deveſts them, at the ſame time, of every feeling that becomes a man : And what creates them reſpect at home, loads their memory with infamy and deteſtation abroad : Their nefarious conduct in the acquiſitions of their fortunes, is often puniſhed even in this life with the exemplary vengeance

of Heaven, and the dreadful deluge of luxury, that consequently overflows the kingdom, must eventually prove our destruction.

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LETTER IX.

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IT is impoſſible that theſe, and other ſymptoms of a broken conſtitution which diſtinguiſh the preſent aſpect of public affairs in Great Britain, can be obſerved by our political neighbours with indifference: They have long beheld our poſperity, and watched our motions with a jealous eye. We mortified them too deeply laſt war, to expect their profeſſions of friendſhip can ever be ſincere. For the good fortune which then

then attended our expeditions both by ſea and land they ſtill owe us a grudge: And their own intereſt will effectually diſpoſe them to embrace the firſt opportunity in their power of indulging the reſentment they feel, and recovering the property and honour they have loſt.

France, we may believe, is peculiarly pleaſed to find us doing her work for her ſo completely. It is obvious, every ſhilling we expend as well as every life we loſe in the quarrel, is attended with an additional increaſe to her proweſs and treaſury. She is enriched both in men and money, preciſely in the ſame proportion, and by the ſame means that we are impoveriſhed. There

is a thouſand ways of deceiving us into credulity. *Sully's* * famous maxim is no longer the characteriſtic of their government: And we can never guard, with too much caution, againſt their dark, deſigning policy. Their perfidious artifices and talents for intrigue, every court in Europe knows from experience; Nor is a rupture with them to be dreaded while they can bear our depredation on their underhanded trade with impunity; or invent a ſoothing and plauſible reply to our ſpiritleſs remonſtrances. Indeed, their patience has always been wonderful, where reſentment interfered with their intereſt.

* 'That honeſty is the beſt policy.'

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But can it be ſuppoſed that things will not, of themſelves, ſoon come to a criſis? And it is certainly the beſt policy that provides moſt effectually againſt the worſt that could happen. It is ſaid the young French monarch has *but little ſtomach for the fight*. Though Falſhood and Slander had no ſhare in the fabrication of this fact, it affords no adequate ſecurity for us. It is now ſome time ſince war had any mighty dependance on the perſonal exertion or military addreſs of kings. Whatever they ſhould do in the cabinet, they do nothing in the field, but by proxy. The diſpute, though excluſively theirs, is ſolely decided by their ſub-ſubjects: So that even this effeminate

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prince may commence hoſtilities to-morrow without ſtirring from his ſofa, or abridging one of his pleaſures. His inclinations, therefore, however pacific, muſt unavoidably, ſooner or later, give way to the wiſhes of thoſe about him: And they know as well as any people in the world, when and where, and how to ſtrike the critical blow with ſucceſs.

We all know that their docks already teem with naval preparations of every kind; that their ports in every part of the kingdom are daily launching privateers, and other ſhips of war, that wave the inſigns of hoſtility in our face, and thunder defiance along the Britiſh ſhore. Truſt me it is not a pitiful

a pitiful fleet of Colonial ſmall craft that thus infeſt our domeſtic ſeas; that inſpire our naked coaſts with terror; that invade our unwieldy ſhips of war, and that ſo effectually put a ſtop to our intercourſe with other nations, but a clandeſtine armament of France under American colours. Such is the perfidious maſk by which they hide the moſt villainous enterpriſes, and, while they fawn and ſmile in our face, ſtab us to the heart. It is the trick they have uniformly played ſince the commencement of the war: And it is the only one by which they can with moſt ſafety to themſelves help to protract it: Their time of openly breaking with us, is not till both parties are ſufficiently exhauſted. Then

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it may be expected they mean as usual to take the advantage. And why will we not foresee before it is out of our power to avoid the danger.

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LETTER X.

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THESE things not only engroſs the ſpeculation, and intereſt the hearts of the brethren, but are objects of the moſt ſerious conſequence to every individual in the kingdom. All, eſpecially, who wiſh well to virtue, to government, to their country, labour under the moſt affecting apprehenſions from the preſent complexion of things. They expected much from this campaign, and were willing to give the miniſter

miniſter as much credit as he pleaſed for his exertions: They knew he had been hitherto circumſcribed in his operations: Motives of humanity betrayed him into a preſumption, that the rebels would never carry their oppoſition to ſuch a height. Though we ſaw the futility of this idea from the beginning, it was excuſeable, and even reſpectable from the ſentiment that ſuggeſted it: But why was it not abandoned the moment the Howes were inveſted with their preſent powers. What are the largeſt commiſſions good for, even when connected with the moſt approved abilities, without the means of putting them in execution? Whether the fault lies in the cabinet or the camp is ſtill a ſecret, but our military

military meaſures, have been hitherto puſhed with the moſt unaccountable remiſsneſs. And the hiſtory of this country, perhaps, furniſhes but few inſtances, in which the reſolution of the prince has either diſcovered more firmneſs, or been exerted with leſs alacrity and deciſion.

It ought never to be forgotten, that every moment we loſe, or remain inactive, is of unſpeakable advantage to the enemy. The more time they gain, they can fight us at laſt with the greater probability of ſucceſs. Their Generals would be pitiful, indeed, did they not profit eſſentially by our delays: And that they do, we may per-

haps feel as we have in part already felt to our coſt.

This obvious conſequence of our dilatory movements, has always been foreſeen by every body but ſuch as were concerned in planning and conducting them. Whoever wiſhes well to the cauſe, perceives it now I believe in its utmoſt weight: For by this fatal procraſtination in our counſels and operations, America, whoſe exemplary ſpirit and deciſion ought to have taught us better, has rendered herſelf almoſt impregnable; the miniſtry have totally loſt the confidence of the people; and the popularity of government, which was juſt beginning to revive, is eternally blaſted. Thus the national dignity,

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the honour of the Britiſh flag, the hereditary claims of the legiſlature over every part of the empire, the power of the maternal ſtate to reclaim her refractory ſubjects, all the money ſhe has ſpent, and all the valuable lives loſt on the occaſion, her vaſt commercial intereſt and connections, her internal tranquillity, the authority of her laws, and the glory of her arms, are all in this inſtance moſt baſely ſacrificed to miniſterial timidity, or official indolence. Secretaries under ſecretaries, deputies, ſub-deputies, and dependants without number or uſe, have been implicitly and criminally intruſted with affairs on which the welfare of the whole kingdom hangs. We confide in miniſters, miniſters confide in their clerks, both

confide in contractors, and contractors confide in their ſervants: So that what depends on all, is faithfully accompliſhed by none: And the intereſts of a whole nation, for ought we know, may be thwarted or obſtructed by the debility or caprice of the moſt contemptible individual in it.

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LETTER XI.

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WHILE thoſe of true patriotiſm and loyalty deeply regret the blunders of adminiſtration, there are not wanting who regard them with very different ſenſations. It is a truth, however, little to the honour of individuals, that moſt of thoſe whoſe ſervices, thou haſt formally diſcarded, only rejoice at every appearance of miſmanagement. The workings of envy are endleſs, and generally without ef-

fect. In the preſent caſe it is otherwiſe: The wranglings of theſe men have not only conſiderably impeded the wheels, but alſo weakened the hands of government. The ſpirit that now rages in the colonies, has been fomented by the clamours of oppoſition: And to ſuppreſs the one, would, perhaps, be to little purpoſe while the others are not ſilenced.

Their ſituation, in this country, is by no means uncommon; and, if it does not juſtify, it alleviates at leaſt their violence. They expected more perhaps than they had any title to, and miſtake that averſion which preſumption creates, for an ungrateful requital of their ſervices. Thus inſpired with

with the moſt ſanguinary ideas of their own importance, and piqued to the heart at the general contempt into which they are fallen, they attribute every miſcarriage not to accident or contingency, but miſconduct. All the late coercive acts of parliament they conſider of courſe not as indiſpenſable from the ſeditious manners of the colonies, but as that which produced them.

This, therefore, is the leading idea on which the whole oppoſition is founded. They ſuppoſe a conſpiracy ſomewhere againſt the liberties of the ſubject, and have pledged themſelves to the public, that nothing ſhall be wanting on their part, to aſſert and maintain them.

This is the magic by which they alarm and captivate the multitude; The trick like that of all other conjectureres, is but a ſhallow one: It was adapted, however, to the level of common underſtandings, and did not a little execution. Hence queſtions relative to prerogative on one hand, and privilege on the other, were ſtarted and agitated with infinite keeneſs and ingenuity by the ableſt on both ſides. But intemperate controverſy is ſeldom attended with any degree of mutual conviction: The ſubject is often forgotten in the heat of diſputation: The affections unavoidably warp the judgment, and the ſuggeſtions of reaſon are ſupplanted by thoſe of the heart.

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The ſucceſs of our arms was conſequently the likelieſt means to proſelyte the people, and ſilence the growling of faction. Every trifling advantage hitherto gained, has had a moſt ſenſible effect on the general ſpirit. On the contrary, the leaſt circumſtance againſt us throws the whole nation into melancholy. Then the courage of the minority revives, and their party is every where reinforced. It is even ſhrewdly ſuſpected that a few of them with a temerity as criminal as it is daring, have privately aſſiſted the enemies of their country, by procuring them both money and advice.

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LETTER XII.

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THE predominating maxim in the conſtitution of England, is literally what Roſſeau means in his Social Compact, by *the right of the ſtrongeſt*. That we may reſiſt the encroachments of government on our liberties and properties, is an idea which Engliſhmen poſſeſs by inheritance: And it ſignifies nothing to diſprove or reprobate what the meaneſt, as well as the greateſt, regard as the ſole palladium of

of their freedom, and the firſt article of their political creed.

Such a general conviction, whether founded on right or wrong, muſt be productive of the ſame conſequences: Nor is it the intereſt of the prince to forget what his ſubjects ſo religiouſly remember. While they conſider it as their ultimate appeal, pretences on which to proceed can never be a wanting. The genius of Diſcord is peculiarly prolific in ſtratagems for exciting and fomenting every ſpecies of civil or inteſtine commotion. But it has been long obſerved, that, when once ſubjects draw the ſword againſt their ſovereign, they uniformly throw away the ſcabbard, and take the deſperate

reſolution of either making good their claims or laying down their lives.

The attempt, however, is the more delicate and dangerous, that, when abortive, it ſtrikes mankind as peculiarly dark and atrocious. In that caſe, and for the moſt ſubſtantial reaſons, the inſtigators and inſtruments are branded with the name of *Traitors*. Their puniſhment is adequate to their crime: They loſe the protection of the laws: Their lives are actually proſcribed, and their properties formally confiſcated.

But the world at large, judge of political revolutions more by the effects they produce, than by the motives that occa-

occaſion them: And hiſtory furniſhes innumerable inſtances in which the moſt lawleſs extravagances have been eventually juſtified by the ſucceſs that attended them. Great atchievements, however incompatible with the milder virtues of humanity, are too ſplendid not to be admired; and thoſe, with a very few exceptions, who are moſt fortunate will always be moſt popular.

The Americans are, in their own opinion at leaſt, enforcing, with unexpected unanimity and perſeverance, this great conſtitutional principle. An act of the Britiſh legiſlature has declared them Rebels: But ſome of the moſt reſpectable voices in the kingdom proteſted againſt it. Poſterity, as

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in all other caſes, will judge of it by the iſſue: While that remains uncertain, it becomes no party to pronounce in a tone of deciſion incompatible with the oppoſite opinion of the other. Political toleration is often as neceſſary as religious. Inconveniencies are inſeparable from both: But prickles that ſurround the roſe are ſeldom any detriment to the fragrance it emits. Nor did ever ſociety ſuffer ſo materially from indulging as from ſuppreſſing the voluntary and undiſguiſed ſentiments of her members.

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LETTER XII.

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WERE theſe Letters dictated by any other principle than the deepeſt concern for the welfare of thy country, and the honour of thy reign, matters might eaſily be exaggerated. Alas! our evils need no exaggeration: Nor can it be of any advantage whatever to make things worſe than they are. Truth, as well as light, may be ſometimes too ſtrong for weak eyes; but falſhood, like darkneſs, is always

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leſs or more connected with a certain degree of danger.

Wherever I look, proofs of national miſery ſtare me in the face. We are loaded with a debt which no other people on earth could bear: Our treaſury is exhauſted ſupporting mercenaries, whom we have hired to enforce the dignity of parliament: The flower of our youth have bravely embarked in the cauſe of their country: Many a promiſing hero have already bled and died in avenging her injuries: Wives are every where bereft of their huſbands, and children of their fathers. What ſhoals of widows and orphans, and whole families, are to be ſeen in almoſt every public place in *mourning* for

for the loſs of relations! Do not the neutral grow intereſted, the gayeſt ſad, the rich tremble for their property, and the poor eagerly wiſh for a change of condition? What coſtly ſacrifices does not humanity daily make at the bloody ſhrine of Ambition? Alas! when ſhall the tender endearments of domeſtic tranquillity be more eligible to the judgments and intereſting to the hearts of kings than the purple trophies of prerogative and dominion?

Dreadful as our inteſtine calamities are, the dangers that threaten and ſurround us heighten them exceedingly. Government, to deepen the ridicule and contempt their proceedings have already produced, may truſt in

proteſtations which cannot, in the nature of things, be real. Timidity, while it ſtartles at every proſpect of future difficulty, has no other object than immediate and preſent eaſe. Let us, however, ſuppoſe the worſt, and, horrible as the picture is, venture, for once, to view it ſteadily.

It is but reaſonable to aſk what we could poſſibly do, ſhould France, now or before the next compaign, finding the rebels ſtill formidable and ſtaunch to their purpoſe, lift up the vizor that has hitherto concealed her intrigues, and, without further ceremony, change her promiſes into defiance? Which part of the empire would they not then find acceſſible and de-

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fenceleſs? Our ſettlements in the Eaſt offer them an eaſy acquiſition from the anarchy and diſſentions that now prevail among ſuch as ſhould protect them. England, without army or navy, is every where obnoxious to the firſt depredations. Scotland and Ireland are equally expoſed, and totally deſtitute of force to repel an invaſion. America, like the barbarous daughter of an indulgent and loving mother, ſtretches out her arms to embrace our enemies: Nor could all the vigilance and courage of our fleet prevent their landing. In that caſe, the ſeat of the war muſt inevitably happen ſome where in the Britiſh territories: Both men and money would conſequently be a wanting: And unleſs ſome genius, hitherto

unknown, ſpeedily wriggles into power, I doubt, though we had ſtrength ſufficient, we ſhould not have ſpirit for the buſineſs.

It is not material, and it would not be pleaſing, to recapitulate the various cauſes to which we owe our preſent ſtate of abjection and embarraſſment: The retroſpect of theſe may be uſeful to future politicians, but an honeſt mind revolts at the contemplation of intrigues ſo repugnant to the nature of government, to the principles of honour, to the ſpirit of humanity. The hiſtorians of diſtant periods, when poſterity views the ſcene diſpaſſionately, muſt deplore the fate of a nation and age ſo impoſed on by jugglers, and torn

torn by factions, as we have been. It is one of the greateſt misfortunes incident to ſociety, that there always has been, and will be, while the world laſts, a certain order of men who live intirely at the expence of others, monopolize the whole property and power into their own hands, and, like all other public robbers, are eternally quarrelling about the diſtribution of the plunder, at the ſame time that thoſe beneath them are the only ſufferers, and muſt yet be quiet. A party ſpirit is the hereditary curſe of Britiſh politics. Few men have reſolution or ſteadineſs enough to purſue the dictates of right reaſon in the menacing front of oppoſition and outrage. And tempers moſt eaſily

unhinged are not always connected with the worſt intentions: So that I am profeſſedly one of thoſe who think that moſt things which are now branded as inſtances of mal-adminiſtration, are the natural conſequences of ſuch various impediments as have all along been thrown in the miniſter's way.

How, therefore, to extricate the nation from her preſent difficulties, is a queſtion of much greater importance than whence they originated: To this intereſting ſpeculation every good mind frequently and unavoidably recurs. On a ſubject of ſuch magnitude I ſhall mention what has ſometimes ſtruck me with all due

deference

deference to the opinion of thoſe who may decide from better information, and a ſtronger capacity. The intelligent in this, as in all other matters, will ſtill judge for themſelves without deſpiſing the ideas of others, eſpecially where ſuch a latitude of ſentiment is daily indulged. Indeed, I ſhould be ſorry to ſpeak the language of a demagogue in any thing but where my conceptions and apprehenſions ſo unfortunately differ from ſome of the greateſt as well as the beſt of men: it becomes me to mention my convictions, though not without firmneſs, yet with modeſty and candour. In ſhort, I ſtill mean to ſpeak as I think; to be en-

ſlaved by no man's authority, and to impoſe my noſtrums as infallible on none.

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LETTER XIV.

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IT has always appeared to me the ſupreme Quixotiſm of political quackery to ſuppoſe the Britiſh conſtitution could be extended with her acquiſitions. The genius of her government, like ſome of her internal productions, ſeems incapable of exportation. Is it to be imagined that ſo much additional territory does not require ſome alteration in the maternal ſyſtem? New circumſtances and connections

nections unavoidably occaſion new adjuſtments: In every poſſible ſituation, eaſe and independance are the firſt objects of human attention: And then we are not ſo much guided by former cuſtom as by preſent convenience, or whatever elſe contingency may ſuggeſt.

There is a medium in every thing, beyond which abortive hope and preposterous exertion muſt be the conſequence. This remark is ſingularly verified by our late commercial efforts in every quarter of the world. Trade, to be ſure, is a great national object, but it ought not either to be the only or the chief. The balance between internal and external improvement ſhould

ſhould be delicately managed. It can never be too ſtrongly inculcated, that ſociety, like individuals, are ſeldom the better, but almoſt always the worſe, for becoming too ſoon rich. Indeed our ſituation is happily adapted for appropriating all the advantages that the moſt liberal ſyſtem of navigation can beſtow. And our general propenſity to a nautical life has evidently more need of the curb than the ſpur. Our commercial laws are notwithſtanding immenſe, and, from a fatal inattention to this circumſtance, all framed in favour of adventurers. Hence the heart and vitals of the empire are exhauſted and debilitated by uniting parts ſo heterogeneous, and cheriſhing extremities ſo remote.

The

The vaſt importation of foreign productions into this iſland has ſtrangely perverted our general taſte: By creating nameleſs adventitious deſires, it has made our felicity in ſome ſort dependant on another ſoil, another climate, and another market than our own: So that like trees propagated by inciſion from the original ſtock, we are no longer known for what we were. Our native characteriſtic is abſorbed in the faſhions, follies, and profligacies of other countries. And that ſingular honeſty, which has long been the glory of England, is exchanged for every ſpecies of impoſture and metamorphoſis that can degrade the mind of man.

It is but the neceſſary effects of the ſame ſpirit that the country is every where ſo much abandoned, while our towns and cities are crouded enormouſly. All ſorts of mechanics, manufactures, and mercantile affairs, are univerſally preferred to agriculture, which, though by far the ſimpleſt, the moſt innocent, and eſſential art of life, is relinquiſhed for almoſt every other, either becauſe more faſhionable or leſs laborious: Thus the internal reſources with which the bounty of Providence has ſo liberally provided us, are overlooked for the ſake of ſupplies, which, from our particular ſituation, ſeem to be under the wiſe prohibition of nature.

Nothing

Nothing can be more palpably ſtriking than that our ſkill and ſucceſs in maritime arrangements have betrayed us into an error, which is now become radical and perhaps incurable. An epidemical and unnatural thirſt for affluence and independance is among the firſt impulſes we feel: And before we know any thing of our ſituation at home, moſt of us are for puſhing our fortunes abroad. The aſtoniſhing wealth that attended the ravages and villainy of our firſt adventurers has not yet loſt its influence on their poſterity. Not all the infamy that loads their memories is ſufficient to deter us from their crimes where the ſame hopes of plunder tempt us to commit them.

While commerce, therefore, has enlarged our ideas, refined our manners, and improved our circumſtances, it has alſo extinguiſhed that examplary flame of patriotiſm and general attachment to probity, which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed the lives and tranſactions of our anceſtors. It inſpires the lower orders of mankind with petulance and impatience under the miſeries and ſeverities to which they are condemned by their lot in life: It inſenſibly alienates our affections from our mother country, and gives us an early predilection for every place where vice can be indulged with impunity, and fortunes acquired without induſtry: It creates a thouſand connections and attachments

as

inconſiſtent with all good policy and interior improvement: It renders vaſt and diſtant poſſeſſions, however expenſive and precarious, perfectly indiſpenſible: It gives birth to all the chimeras and feuds of envy and ambition in every department of ſociety, and enriches individuals at the ſame time that it impoveriſhes the public: It virtually affords a ſanction to the fouleſt enormities that an unprincipled heart, in conjunction with a ſavage, unrelenting temper, can either deviſe or perpetrate: It provides amply for every ſordid and ſiniſter diſpoſition, and encourages no ſort of merit but ſuch as ariſes from ſiniſter habits, and has a ſiniſter tendency. In ſhort. this is the great principle and primary object of

all colonization, and that to which we owe whatever of blood or treaſure our foreign ſettlements have coſt us.

It is equally ſtrange and true, that thoſe who bawl and bounce moſt about the loſs of America, admit notwithſtanding that ſuch an event muſt inevitably happen ſome time or other. But why not now? In what future period can we leſs feel or better ſupport the conſequences of ſuch a rupture. I am not to learn what a number of forcible and tender conſiderations render this propoſal totally impracticable. I know the human heart is loth to relinquiſh dominion. I know the importance of America is more the reſult of what it has coſt than of what it

can ever repay. I know too that every ſcheme ſuggeſted by unintereſted men for the benefit of their country, appears romantic and fantaſtical to little, timid, ſiniſter minds. With them I have no concern. By this time I perſuade myſelf thou art not unwilling to hear and conſider whatever makes for peace with candour and attention. I ſhall, therefore, in what remains of this correſpondence, and with my uſual freedom and reſpect, lay before thee what has occurred to me and others eſpecially of the brethren on this branch of the ſubject.

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LETTER XV.

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TO part with America, after ſhe has put us to ſuch a vaſt expence of money and men, is mortifying enough. But the queſtion is, Whether we can do better? Let ſuch as embrace the affirmative ſtand forth, and ſatisfy the nation at large, that their expectations are not improbable. For my own part, I once thought as they do, but, as matters now ſtand, my opinion is perfectly different.

It ſeems a fundamental idea in this argument, that the ſuperiority which the kings troops, diſcovered in the beginning of the war, is every day diminiſhing. The rebels have a thouſand circumſtances in their favour which we have not. They are at home, and inſpired by the proximity of whatever is dear to them. We fight againſt them in a country which they cannot but know infinitely better than we. On their ſide it has at leaſt the appearance of defence; on ours of invaſion and oppreſſion: And the bulk of mankind muſt pronounce accordingly. Their very want of diſcipline may be productive of the beſt effects. Should it continue to lull us into ſecurity and indolence,

lence, as it has hitherto done, their victory at laſt muſt be certain and complete: Indeed, the utmoſt perfection in the martial ſyſtem is but of little avail in ſome ſituations and againſt certain enemies. Where ſucceſs depends on tedious marches, through a rough, unknown, uncultivated and deſolate country, and where the adverſe forces ſtudiouſly avoid a pitched battle, but hang on the rear, harraſs ſtraggling parties, and lay every thing waſte, mere mechanical adroitneſs can do no great execution.

The rebels have hitherto been moſt at a loſs for inferior officers: But we have every reaſon to believe that this deficiency is now amply ſupplied by an

unexpected acceſſion of volunteers from almoſt every port in Europe. Their Generals are evidently men of courage and capacity. With them it is the period of enthuſiaſm: Their hearts are rouſed, and their paſſions inflamed. A ſpirit has gone out among them of that excentric and enterpriſing nature, which renders it impoſſible to pronounce, with any degree of probability, what they may not accompliſh. For when or wherever the feelings of mankind are thus expanded with objects of ſuch uncommon magnitude and importance, as involves all their greateſt and deareſt intereſts, they are uniformly animated by ſome thing like inſpiration, and prompted inſtinctively to grandeur and magnanimity.

Though

Though every degree of excellence in the military profeſſion requires the greateſt experience and capacity in ſuch as are deſtined to command, perfection in moſt of its ſubordinate functions depends on nothing extraordinary. In a regular army every individual is confined to his ſtation: His duty, movements, and efforts, are all preſcribed and limited. Their genius, ſtrength, or dexterity, in a private man, have not the ſmalleſt chance of diſtinction: It is otherwiſe among raw troops: Accidents are perpetually occurring that occaſion and produce the moſt excentric and daring exertions. And deeds of examplary valour operate on minds inflamed like thoſe of the Americans with

immediate and inſtinctive ſympathy. All true heroiſm is grafted in emulation, and wherever exhibited creates a ſort of temporary contagion. There are times when a ſingle impulſe of inſtantaneous ardour, makes a deeper and more general impreſſion than all the diſcipline in the world. Such is the critical hour when the greateſt merit has often emerged from the thickeſt obſcurity. And there is no inſtance in hiſtory of a whole people uniting in the ſame ſpirit, from the ſame motive, and in the ſame cauſe, among whom ſome ſuch illuſtrious characters did not make their appearance.

Beſides the dawn of that military genius which generally precedes and

preſages the revolution of kingdoms, and which the novelty of the ſcene, as well as the extremity to which they are reduced, ſo ſtrongly excites, the Americans have every thing within themſelves: Europe can only ſupply them with luxuries and crimes. Their territory is immenſe, and prolific to the laſt degree. Their rivers abound with fiſh, their foreſts with game, and their grounds are capable of rearing every ſort of fruit, herbage, and grain in a very ſhort time, and with very little toil. Their reſources, indeed, are totally inexhauſtible. They have already relinquiſhed every idea of property, and generouſly meet us in the field with nothing to loſe, but their liberties and lives: And theſe they have determined to yield or retain together.

Yes,

Yes, they have burnt and demoliſhed their towns with their own hands, laid aſide their various occupations, left their families and relations, however dear to them, willingly foregone all ſocial and domeſtic enjoyments, and, with every hardſhip and danger that attends a military life in view, voluntarily flocked to the ſtandard of freedom. Theſe are coſtly ſacrifices, and will be long conſidered as a deciſive teſt of intrepidity and ſpirit.

Yet every true lover of his country cannot but regret, that there was a time, when we had it in our power, both to puniſh their inſolence and preſcribe their duty. It ſeems now problematical at leaſt whether that time is not over,

whether we have not loſt the opportunity which fortune once offered for our recovery. They evidently avail themſelves of all our blunders. Their ſchemes are generally well laid, and ſeldom fail in the execution. In truth, we can hardly ſurpriſe them any where unprepared. Their tone, as ours did, will naturally riſe with every advantage they gain: And we have nothing for it after all the buſtle we made, the ſteps we took, the indignities we bore, and the wonderful things we predicted, but either a ſpeedy retreat or an inglorious capitulation.

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LETTER XVI.

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BUT the ſuppreſſion of this ungrateful and formidable revolt, ſeems an object too much at heart to be now abandoned. Nor do I wiſh it were, but from a ſtrong preſentment, that we may regret our obſtinacy when it is too late.

Suppoſing we ſhould be able, with a large mercenary army, and an additional armament, to ſubjugate the whole continent

continent at laſt, what advantage ſhall we gain by the conqueſt which can be loſt without it? The ſolution of this great queſtion is, what ſhould determine the ſentence of America? My experience of human viciſſitude permits me not to be ſanguine in any thing connected with futurity. But the remarks I ſhall now ſubmit to thy attention, are at leaſt not wholly void of probability.

It is but reaſonable to ſuppoſe that thoſe of moſt property, will find means of removing to the greateſt diſtance from a government that muſt be hateful to them. The leaders and directors in the preſent meaſures, and all who are conſcious of activity and diligence in the execution of

of them, muſt conſider themſelves as peculiarly obnoxious to the power they oppoſed, and, whatever ſhould become of others, are fools indeed, if they provide not ſeaſonably for their own ſafety. Men of independent fortunes can find no great difficulty in ſecuring a retreat in many places of Europe. The back ſettlements will afford an aſylum to ſome, the Spaniſh colonies to more, and there is ſtill room enough to all who have courage and perſeverance ſufficient to poſſeſs it, in thoſe vaſt uninhabited tracts of land where neither army nor navy can penetrate. And what will not a high-ſpirited people do who have no alternative but what they think ſlavery or death? For my part, I ſhould not be diſappointed though they

foſtered their republican principles and prepoſſeſſions among the woods and deſerts, baniſhed themſelves to the remoteſt ſolitudes, incorporated with the native ſavages, or even aſſociated with the wildeſt beaſts, rather than ſubmit to laws they have been ſo much taught to abhor, or acquieſce in taxes that have occaſioned their cataſtrophe.

But what ſtrikes me moſt of all is, the deep-rooted averſion which ſuch as are ſubdued muſt ever entertain againſt their conquerors. It has always been obſerved that antipathies, created by reciprocal injuries among the neareſt relations, ſink the deepeſt and laſt the longeſt. Domeſtic feuds are not to be eradicated but with length of time.

In

In many places of the highlands of Scotland the very name of an Engliſhman is to this moment execrable. And the wanton cruelty of the ſoldiers, after the battle of Culloden, will not be forgotten for many generations. But the reſentment of the human heart is juſt as ſtrong and natural beyond the Atlantic as beyond the Tweed. So that from ſubjects thus impreſſed with a deteſtation of their governors, and ſtill bleeding with the wrongs they received in the defence of what ſeemed to them their unalienable rights, thou haſt nothing to expect, but an extorted homage, in which the heart has no concern. Every inſtance of their obedience muſt be performed with reluctance. And they will embrace with ardour and temerity

merity every opportunity in their power to ſhew their ſettled contempt of authority.

The reimburſement of the treaſury, or reduction of our national debt, is an idea which, however matters ſhould be ſettled, ought not to be relinquiſhed. But how this object ſhould reſult from the conqueſt of America, ſeems to me perfectly enigmatical. In ſuch circumſtances as muſt be the conſequence of their ſubjugation, it will be a very long time indeed, before their trade recovers its former ſpirit. And, independant of commerce, government can reap but little advantage from their domeſtic induſtry, as the value of ſtaple commodities ariſes chiefly from expor-

tation: ſo that taxes may be impoſed without number, but it will be to little purpoſe where there is no fund.

Conſiderable ſums may perhaps ariſe from the ſale or leaſe of the forfeited eſtates. This at leaſt is pretty generally preſumed, but I know not with what probability. Univerſal proſcription is a meaſure, too barbarous to be adopted, in an age ſo enlightened as the preſent, and by a people ſo humane as the Engliſh. And thoſe, who are ſo unhappy as not to be included in the general *amneſty* will take care to leave as little of their property behind them as poſſible. Nor can the pitiful wreck of their fortune, either meet with many purchaſers or be ſold to any advantage.

Few

Few would chooſe to live under a military government, or lay out their money on lands that may be wreſted from their heirs, perhaps in a generation or two: And ſuch as do venture on a bottom ſo unpromiſing and precarious, will, undoubtedly, expect a very profitable bargain. Beſides, from every appearance in the political world, it ſeems not at all improbable, that the flame now raging in the new continent, may not be extinguiſhed for ages. The various diviſions and boundaries of the ſeveral kingdoms and ſtates of Europe, are almoſt all eſtabliſhed on the moſt permanent foundation by mutual conſent, and beyond the power of controverſy. Nor is the ambition of princes any longer confined to petty

depredations on the diſtant provinces, or naked frontiers of their domeſtic territories. The ſpirit of colonization and foreign conqueſt or commerce, is at leaſt common alike to all maritime powers. And all the ſtates of Europe are ſo locally and intimately warped together, by one cloſe compacted and cementing ſyſtem of intereſt, that none of them can be materially affected apart from the reſt: ſo that whenever they fall a contending among themſelves, they will, in all likelihood, reſerve hoſtilities for the plains of America: And who would become proprietors where invaſions are to be ſo conſtantly dreaded, where remains of war muſt be ſo frequent, and where ſcenes of horror cannot but be very familiar?

At all events we muſt reckon on a war with our neighbours. The plight we ſhall then be in, muſt unavoidably diſpoſe them to take the advantage: And we ſhall have buſineſs enough for all the heads and hearts in the kingdom. A new plan of policy for the colonies, the regulation of their trade, and adjuſtment of their finances, muſt be digeſted, which cannot be put into execution but at a moſt incredible expence. We ſhall find, for one article, a ſtanding army indiſpenſable, not only to ſupport the new arrangement in all its parts, but alſo and chiefly to repel the inſurgents, who, in conjunction with their ſavage allies, will be continually ſallying from behind and annoying the

ſettlements in their vicinity. Our navy, as now, will have ſufficient employment in guarding their coaſts: For their genius for ſmuggling will then be tenfold more daring and ſyſtematical than ever. We ſhall have facilitated their improvement and experience in all the arts of navigation, and opened their eyes to every advantage they derive from the largeſt rivers, the deepeſt ſeas, the wideſt Continent, the moſt ſpacious, numerous, and commodious harbours in the known world. All the naval powers of Great Britain muſt be unable to prevent their colluſion or intercept their commerce with moſt trading nations in Europe. And they are too much maſters of the mercantile ſyſtem not to prefer as much

much as poſſible the cheapeſt markets. Under ſuch a combination of circumſtances ſo perplexing and adverſe, how can we take the field againſt the whole united houſe of Bourbon? Without an army, without a fleet, and without money, by what miracle can we hope to be ſaved? And, to render our ruin ſtill more inevitable, ten to one we are involved in a continental war. This is the laſt and ſureſt expedient by which our enemies will endeavour to complete our cataſtrophe.

But theſe ideas are much too painful to be exhibited in detail, or traced minutely in all their various aſſociations and conſequences. They have ſatisfied

me, however, that the objects of this war are moſt palpably chimerical in every view, that we owe the loſs of America intirely to the blunders of thoſe on whom our military equipments and movements depend, and that the honour of the Britiſh nation has fallen a miſerable ſacrifice to their lazineſs or inattention. Nor is this my opinion only. It will be found, perhaps, more general than any hitherto indulged on the ſubject. For the complexion of the public and private ſpeculation, uniformly agree in apprehending the moſt pernicious conſequences from meaſures ſo palpably abortive.

Be not either perſuaded or deceived into an idea that this is the mere obſolete language of faction. No; It is, without exaggeration or hypocriſy, the very beſt expreſſion of loyalty. There is not a ſervant about thee, whoſe ſtation I envy, whoſe place I would accept. With none of the parties have I the moſt diſtant connection. My fortune makes me equally independant of all, my heart inclines me to ſpeak what I take to be the truth, and it is not worth while for one of my age and obſcurity, to take ſo much pains about any thing in which my intereſt and duty are not both deeply concerned.

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LETTER XVII.

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I Should be glad to hear of conciliating propoſitions from the colonies. We might then inſiſt on terms. But overtures of that nature are not ſoon to be expected from them. They have not yet made any, and the violence of oppoſition would not permit them though they ſhould. They are too much elated with the proſpect of ſucceſs to think of receding. They know the inconveniencies to which we are

reduced too well not to perſiſt in multiplying them. They have too much countenance from their abettors on this ſide of the water, not to do what they can in accompliſhing their predictions. Their paſſions are too much agitated, and their hearts too deeply intereſted, to render peace an object of general ſolicitude, eſpecially as connected with the loſs of what has coſt them ſo dear, while ſo many circumſtances are ſtill in their favour.

Indeed, ſo long as their enthuſiaſm continues to operate thus univerſally, thoughts of reconciliation will be the laſt they indulge. The tumult of war is an object of terror and diſlike only at a diſtance. The minds of men, when

when once inflamed and accuſtomed to ſcenes of blood, have not half the pleaſure in any other. This, more than all the proſpects of fame, more than all the hopes of reward, more than the niceſt ſenſe of honour, reconciles the ſoldier to his duty, alleviates unavoidable fatigue, and ſupports him in the hour of extremity and danger. The Americans are now initiated in the myſteries of the field, and have enjoyed all the variety of a military life. Their leaders have every motive for continuing the quarrel that can operate on the leaſt as well as the greateſt minds: And the troops in general would lay down their arms, with the ſame ſenſations of uneaſineſs; that it is natural for men to feel; on a

revolution

revolution that effectually ſecludes all hopes of bettering their condition; on quitting a certain for an uncertain ſubſiſtence; on exchanging the perpetual buſtle of a camp, ſo congenial to rude minds, for the dull and ſolitary ſcenes of domeſtic lethargy and retirement.

Animated with ſuch ideas, and poſſeſſed of ſuch a ſituation, the moſt enlarged and ſanguine ambition is a natural and neceſſary ſentiment. But it is the creature ſolely of our own formation, and, gigantic as it may appear, we muſt either ſoothe it into good humour, or ſmother it the beſt way we can. For now it is but too obvious, without giving into any gloomy or romantic ideas of deſponden-

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cy, that an immediate reconciliation with the colonies is indiſpenſable to our political ſalvation.

It is my opinion, but it may be falſe, that, at the concluſion of this campaign, Lord Chatham's motion will appear no longer romantic. In that caſe it was only a few months premature. He propoſed a removal of whatever the colonies thought a grievance, while our ſucceſs in the laſt year was not yet obliterated by the miſcarriages of this, while the reinforcement of the rebels both by ſea and land, was yet unknown, and while the piddling manœuvres of the War-office, in a criſis the moſt important we ever felt, had not yet tranſpired.

Far

Far as I am from thinking that we ought then to have adopted his preſcription implicitly, I ſee not at preſent how an accommodation can be otherwiſe obtained. A mutual ceſſation of hoſtilities, is the firſt ſtep to be taken. And to that, as they have hitherto acted only on the defenſive, they will readily agree. Let us next hear their conditions with temper and deliberation. They could not, with any propriety, inſiſt on a recall of our forces without an immediate diſmiſſion of their own. Though they ſhould, we have but little to dread from a compliance with that requiſition. Only the ampleſt ſecurity would be neceſſary, leſt they retracted when they found them-

themſelves in ſafety, what in a more hoſtile ſituation they might be very glad to grant.

In this place I would carefully avoid giving any unneceſſary pain, but a very large field of mutual conceſſion undoubtedly opens. How naturally do we often miſtake the dictates of pride for thoſe of dignity. There is nothing unmanly in erring through miſtake. There is nothing ſo mean or contemptible as a pragmatical vindication of the moſt palpable abſurdities. Without the moſt evident ſymptoms of regret on both ſides, the wounds inſeparable from private friendſhip could never be cloſed. And it happens rarely indeed, that one party is ſolely to blame.

blame. At all events once begin the negociation. Much to be ſure depends on ſettling preliminaries. But it is a truth of which the majority of thy ſubjects are deeply perſuaded, that they can demand nothing, and we have not any thing to grant, that can be half ſo pernicious to the intereſts of the nation, as perſiſting in a war at once ſo ruinous and uncertain.

Should they inſiſt on being treated with as independant ſtates, we may avoid giving a ſanction to that aſſumption if poſſible, but the difference it makes will be immaterial in the iſſue. The only hold we have of them is, natural affection, but which can bind

them as individuals merely, not as a ſociety. Without this, the ſtrongeſt political compact at ſuch a diſtance is no object at all. And nothing can recover their wonted tenderneſs for us ſo effectually, as a liberal acknowledgement and reprobation of whatever they conſider in our paſt conduct, as injurious to their rights.

There is not a doubt, but they would begin with exacting a formal repeal of all our obnoxious and coercive acts of parliament. Nothing now could be wiſer on our part, than the fulleſt acquieſcence with their propoſal. Nor would it be any juſt impeachment of the wiſdom and policy that planted them: Miniſters ſhould act with prudence

dence and foreſight, but are by no means accountable for contingencies that lie involved in the impenetrable deeps of futurity. As circumſtances have happened, may it not be proper to change a ſyſtem of adminiſtration which in a different ſtate of things, could not have been altered but for the worſe? The end of the legiſlation has not anſwered the intention. Other meaſures may produce better effects: they can hardly be attended with worſe; perhaps it is impoſſible they can be ſuggeſted from more diſintereſted motives: It was not improbable that we ſhould be able to ſubdue the colonies; but who could foretell that they could find means of deriving ſo much aſſiſtance from our natural enemies; that

they could muſter and maintain ſuch a force; that they could keep us ſo long at bay, and that official lethargy in but a ſingle inſtance, could produce ſo many ſerious and important conſequences.

It is wonderful to obſerve how much the complexion of human affairs depends on what appears to us mere accident and chance, and by what ſtrange and trivial means the greateſt revolutions are often effected. Who knows but this ſingle overſight may help to heal our political diviſions at home, and reſtore happineſs and tranquillity to our diſtreſſed countrymen abroad. Let us hope the wound is not yet ſo deep as to admit of

no cure. The ſight of an olive branch from the Britiſh General, whatever the congreſs might feel, however the army might grumble, would, notwithſtanding, be a delightful ſpectacle to many of the inhabitants of that hoſtile Continent. Thoſe in the minority may complain and inveigh as uſual, that their advice was not followed ſooner, and be for reprobating a ſcheme, becauſe, though not materially, yet formally different from theirs. For faction is never without ſome pretenſions to keep her petulance and preſumption in countenance. But ſuch of the cabinet as are honeſt men, ſincerely devoted to their maſter's intereſt, and the public good, and of ſufficient great-

neſs of mind to do the beſt, whatever reſentment or ambition may ſuggeſt to the contrary, have it in their power, by this ſingle expedient, to retrieve the confidence of the nation, and eſtabliſh their popularity on the moſt ſolid and permanent foundation.

Even on ſuppoſition that the rebels ſtill roſe in their demands, and, beſides a total abſolution from all ſubſequent as well as prior acts of parliament, made a point of having a free trade, as matters now are we ought not to heſitate one moment: This to them is an object of the moſt capital importance, and we could loſe nothing by granting it. The ſuſ-

penſion

penſion of their commerce at preſent is more ſenſibly felt with us than ever it could be on that eſtabliſhment. The variety of articles they ſtill have ſo indirectly from this country, ſhews, at once the importance of their traffic to us, and how very naturally they give the preference to our commodities and markets. So that the mercantile intereſt of this nation has nothing to dread, but every thing to expect, from leaving the regulation and management of their trade ſolely in their own hands.

I preſume not to be more particular. The preſent campaign may perhaps give things a turn in our favour, but can by no means ſuperſede the ne-

ceſſity of a peace. This is the great and general idea on which I wiſh to fix thy attention, and the importance of which no ſucceſs whatever can poſſibly invalidate. The few curſory hints now hazarded on a point at once ſo delicate and momentous, can do no harm either to thee or thy ſervants. And my heart is not a little eaſed from having ſuggeſted them. For it is my daily and ardent prayers that an accommodation may ſpeedily take place on ſuch equitable principles as may leave no room for either party to complain. Indeed nothing could be more grateful to my old age than a firm eſtabliſhment of an honourable peace in a country to which I have ſo many obligations,

and

and which I ſtill find ſo dear to every ſentiment of my heart, before I die. I ſhould then ſay with a pious Iſraelite of old, *Now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, O Lord; for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.*

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LETTER XVIII.

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NOtwithſtanding all impediments, ſhould our troops have the good fortune to prove victorious at laſt, it would only be exchanging one inconvenience for another. The difficulty of introducing new regulations, of managing the refractory ſpirit of a people whoſe ſenſe of liberty can never be obliterated, and of reconciling with the genius of the Britiſh conſtitution ſuch a ſtanding force as is ne-

neceſſary to enſure their obedience, appears to me totally inſurmountable: Beſides, the languid trade extorted from them; their dexterity and vigilance in evading every commercial impoſt, preſcription, or penalty; their perpetual and unavoidable complaints, petitions, and remonſtrances, againſt the rapacity and oppreſſion of thy ſervants, and the ſullen diſcontent of their numerous adherents in this capricious country, are the inevitable conſequences of ſuch a problematical event.

But from a view of things ſo extremely afflicting, it is not unnatural to turn aſide: Perhaps the reverſe of the picture, may afford another and a better

a better proſpect. Indeed the novelty of it, apart from every idea of reality, muſt render it an object of ſome attention and amuſement. For there are few minds to whom it is not always much more comfortable to indulge pleaſing fictions than to contemplate diſagreeable truths.

Were the rebels totally in our power, their gallantry, their union among themſelves, and their attachment to one common cauſe, whatever our ideas of that cauſe ſhould be, intitle them, on our account as well as theirs, to the moſt generous treatment. Nor can we loſe any of our own honour by thus conſulting and cheriſhing theirs. They were once

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part of that great family of which thou art head. They are ſtill the deſcendants of our forefathers, and conſequently have a claim on thy indulgence, as parent and protector of the whole. Their diſloyalty is raſh and unnatural, but they thought themſelves ill-uſed. Their complaints were heard with impatience, and their petitions rejected with indelicacy. Such a treatment amounts not to a full vindication, but greatly alleviates the criminality of their conduct. Be perſuaded that majeſty without mercy, is an object of terror, not of confidence: Nor by any means whatever, as the honour of thy crown, the peace of thy mind, and the affections of thy ſubjects are dear to thee, let their

obſtinacy

obſtinacy provoke thee in a ſingle inſtance to forget, that clemency is the only thing that can ſoften dominion to the brave or reconcile them to a temporary ſlavery.

Such lenient meaſures, eſpecially if ſubſequent to a ſucceſsful campaign, are by much the moſt likely means of reclaiming the alienated hearts of the colonies. Nothing is ſo commanding, becauſe nothing is ſo engaging, as that magnanimity which is the only legitimate and inconteſtable indication of greatneſs and benignity. We are betrayed by the benevolent and good-natured into a full and implicit ſurrender of our whole ſouls. In their preſence we throw aſide every maſk

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and inſenſibly become preciſely what nature made us. I have ſeen a criminal before his judge confront the ſtrongeſt evidence with matchleſs audacity, whom, notwithſtanding one kind expreſſion, has confounded and melted into the ampleſt confeſſion of his guilt. They know but little of human nature who think that men can be menaced and hectored into confidence or acknowledgement, and conſult their own dignity moſt miſerably, who in all ſuch caſes have recourſe only to ſeverity. Humanity, and humanity alone, poſſeſſes an immediate acceſs to the hardeſt heart. And when once relenting ſenſations are indulged, whatever has the leaſt appearance of recrimination, is wantonneſs and cruelty.

ty. The moſt general and unconditional remiſſion is the only expedient that can ever recal thy revolted ſubjects to reaſon and allegiance: Leave them to ruminate on what they have done. Their own feelings will ſufficiently chaſtiſe them.

Doubt not but the native conſequence of ſuch a temper will be the moſt univerſal and voluntary exertion on their part to make us all the reſtitution in their power. Our injuries will then ſtrike them ſtill more forcibly than they have yet ſtruck us. They will upbraid themſelves with ingratitude in proportion as they find us diſpoſed to forgive them. They will ſee all our meaſures in quite another

another light, than that in which they have hitherto ſeen them. They will return to their duty like the prodigal with ſuch a conſciouſneſs of demerit, ſuch reſolutions of amendment, and ſuch principles of fidelity, as ſhall do honour to our good opinion of them, and attach them more inviolably to our intereſt than ever. In ſhort, our ſpirits ſhall revive with the happy return of their trade, and their alliance muſt add new power, new ſplendour, and new ſecurity to the ſtate.

Thus, leaving the whole of their internal and external policy to their own diſcretion, we ſhall get free of a moſt troubleſome and expenſive buſineſs. Give them, by all means, what

advice they think proper to aſk, but in no caſe whatever aſſume the province of Dictators. They will expect, while they conſult thee with confidence, to be treated with delicacy. Nor doubt that a cordiality thus reciprocally open and ſincere, can be ſhaken, either by the petulance of individuals, or the interference of enemies. Indeed our mutual intereſts, thus compacted into one indiviſible ſyſtem, would prove our beſt and moſt durable defence both againſt civil commotion and foreign depredation.

The manifold advantages that muſt ariſe to the colonies, from ſuch a vaſt acceſſion of revenue, as this new arrangement muſt produce, are ſo very obvious

obvious and material, that I will venture to aſſert, they ſhall not hazard the propoſal without offering ſome equivalent. What that may be, it is not for me to determine: Had we been ſo provident as to think of it before things became thus deſperate, they would have ſtruck a bargain at almoſt any price. And perhaps it was the only probability we could ever have, of diſcharging the national debt. It ſtrikes me as an object they would ſtill very gladly embrace on any terms. On it their commercial proſperity intirely depends: A free intercourſe with all the world would increaſe their number and augment their ſtrength amazingly. Every court in Europe would then ſolicit their

alliance and encourage their orders. A new ſpirit of emigration would ſpread and diffuſe itſelf through all the ſtates on the ancient continent: And few of them would chooſe to check it too formally, leaſt their colonial cuſtomers ſhould take offence. By a communication ſo liberal and extenſive, opportunities would offer in abundance for all who wiſhed to viſit the new hemiſphere. This conſtant intercourſe would in time leſſen the length of the voyage, or at leaſt moderate the dread of it. And adventurers would leave their native countries with the leſs reluctance, that they could ſtill correſpond ſo eaſily and frequently with their acquaintance and friends.

It is not without variety of the moſt joyous ſenſations, that I thus anticipate the endearing bleſſing of peace. I feel for the wretched multitude who, at the expence of their all, their lives, and what is ſtill dearer to honeſt men than life, their duty, are made the ſervile and ſavage tools of indignant pride and aſpiring villainy. How many innocent, undeſigning and induſtrious families in the vicinity of either camp, are unavoidably expoſed to the moſt barbarous and brutal uſage! How precious and ſalutary would not the news of reconcilement to them be! There is nothing in or about thee, that is to me the leaſt object of envy, but the power of thus announcing

what would communicate ſo much delight to millions. Every good heart in thy dominions, however juſtly incenſed with many particulars of their conduct, would then participate their happineſs with rapture. The whole Britiſh territories would reſound with grateful acclamations to the ſovereign Ruler of the univerſe, for the ſingular indulgence of a conſtitution ſo mild and free, of a prince ſo liberal and benign. I myſelf, tranſported with a laudable enthuſiaſm, would chearfully forego the lethargy of years, and attempt, however unable for the taſk, a panegyrick on thy virtues. Thy unexampled patriotiſm ſo ſuperior to the ſelfiſh ſyſtem of kings, would ſtrike the world with admiration and applauſe.

And

And ages yet to come, would celebrate the ſplendid memory of thy reign with every poſſible demonſtration of affection and gratitude.

LETTER XIX.

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PRIVATE as my ſtation is, and retired as my life has been, for many years, the proceſs of this great national diſpute, has at times, very ſeriouſly engaged my attention. The ſenſeleſs torrent of abuſe ſo furiouſly and ſo audaciouſly poured on thy head, and the heads of all thy ſervants, connections and friends, marks, in the moſt glaring and diſguſtful characters, the political phrenzy of the age. It

hurts every feeling of my heart to find ſuch numbers of ſuch undoubted abilities and moderation in all other reſpects, ſo intoxicated with the delirium of party as to forget they are men. By ſuch intemperate bigots ſociety is always leſs or more in danger: To theſe ſavage violators of ſocial concord, plots, conſpiracies, and every treaſonable practice, owe all their ſtrength and conſequences.

The inflammatory effuſions of PRICE, for example, publiſhed under the ſanction of a pious character, interſperſed with ſo many gloomy and canting vulgarities on purpoſe to ſecure the ſuffrage of the mob, and artfully circulated as the ſentiments of the diſ-

ſenters

ſenters in general, whoſe principles of intolerance are but too well kown, have done irreparable injury to the minds of thy people, fed the diſaffection of ſome, and alienated the diſpoſitions of others. Yet this man, whoſe pamphlets are already forgotten, was ſo much the temporary idol of his deluded partiſans, that, for ſome time, he could hardly walk the ſtreets without a multitude at his heels: In moſt companies, it was even dangerous to call any of his tenets in queſtion. He was quoted as an oracle in every political conteſt, and from his authority there was no appeal. I have heard him compared and preferred to the greateſt ſtateſmen, and patriots of antiquity. But my acknowledged com-

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mand of features never ſtood ſuch a trial, as when I once heard it vociferated, with airs of the moſt conſequential effrontry and taſte, that the gleaning of Lord Shelburne's table, thus detailed by a preſbyterian parſon, would even outlive the *Iliad of Homer*.

To encourage this laudable and romantic ſpirit of *puffing*, the city of London, ſo juſtly celebrated for her choice of magiſtrates and favourites, decreed the *author* a *golden-box*. Some degree of applauſe is even due to originality in iniquity. This memorable inſtance of modern patriotiſm, was intended to ſhew how heartily our inferior magiſtrates concur in a libel againſt

againſt their ſovereign, and the eſtabliſhed government of their country. And it well became the capital of the empire to crown ſuch a treaſonable deed with an honorary reward.

But who knows not, that both America and her abettors among ourſelves have all along, had a ſwarm of ſcribblers in pay, who ſcruple not to aſſert whatever can throw an odium on government, as well as to controvert right or wrong, whatever happens or is alledged in their favour? It is with peculiar indignation that I have often obſerved theſe pitiful *incendaries* blaſting every production that inculcated moderation, as done by ſome Hireling of the miniſter. The moment a per-

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formance of this kind is publiſhed, the ſign is given, the pack is let looſe, and it is hunted down with unrelenting ferocity. It would appear, indeed, from the infamous paragraphs with which the public papers abound, as if ſome deſperate canaille had entered into a ſecret combination, to try how far the licentiouſneſs of the preſs may be carried. It is wonderful to ſee, in almoſt every coffee-houſe how extremely buſy theſe vagrant emiſſaries of rebellion, ſtill are, in diſſeminating their pernicious doctrines. Diſputing clubs are the places eſpecially, where they ſwarm in greateſt numbers, and where they have moſt frequent opportunity of debauching our youth.

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From theſe facts, which conſiſt with my own knowledge, government certainly cannot be too liberal to ſuch as have the fortitude and honeſty to ſtand forth in their behalf. Truſt me, few give themſelves the trouble of writing for a newſpaper but ſuch as have no other means of livelihood: And authors in this predicament would but ill conſult their own intereſt, who ſhould write invariably on the unpopular ſide of decency and adminiſtration. No body would buy their productions, becauſe nobody would read them. So that a man of principle in ſuch a ſituation, muſt either become an advocate of what he knows to be wrong, and proſtitute his abilities

lities to the injury of his country and conſcience, or patiently ſtarve for his integrity.

Wherever there appears a well-wrote paper on the benevolent principles of equity and common ſenſe, it therefore becomes thee to ſearch out the author, and if his circumſtances require it, to reward him accordingly. This meaſure, trivial as it may appear, would procure a moſt important acceſſion to thy peace and popularity. All thy ſubjects are now readers, and all leſs or more poiſoned with the daily invectives that load our preſent publications. For theſe, however contemptible to men of intelligence and ſcience, forcibly affect

affect the vulgar. The ſuppreſſion of them, therefore, in a manner thus princely and humane, would be equally conſiſtent with the beſt policy and the ſtricteſt juſtice. This, however, has ſeldom perhaps never been done effectually. And many a worthy perſon devotes his time and talents in the ſervice of his country, by reprobating every republican chimera that is apt to dazzle aud miſlead the croud, by expoſing their impoſture or ſophiſtry who, under the ſacred banner of freedom, would excite to anarchy and confuſion, by doing all in his power to quaſh a ſpirit of general diſcontent, and by preventing the lawleſs outrages to which temerity and madneſs, are ſo apt to hurry the unprincipled multitude, who, notwithſtanding,

withſtanding, has often the mortification to ſee thoſe careſſed and rewarded whoſe well-known doctrines, are inimical to the peace, the welfare, the very being of ſociety at the ſame time that he can hardly keep himſelf alive or probably rots in a goal. Into what times are we fallen! If this be the fate of virtue, a man to be virtuous muſt be more than human, or leſs than an idiot. Honour and profit are connected with ſedition, while loyalty has nothing to recommend it, but poverty and diſgrace. For ſhame, that the avowed enemies of a powerful and opulent king, ſhould live in eaſe and affluence while ſome of his beſt friends are condemned, by cruel neglect, to a ſpecies of the moſt contemptible obſcurity!

O I wiſh,

I wiſh, therefore, ſome means could be deviſed for affording ſuch public-ſpirited individuals an adequate recompence. It has often ſurpriſed me that a ſubſcription has not, long ſince, been opened for their emolument. When or wherever ſuch a generous ſcheme commences, I can promiſe, in name of the brethren, that every one of them will moſt chearfully contribute their ſhare: The whole community is under the deepeſt obligations to all who have thus ſtrenuouſly aſſerted its juſt rights againſt an inundation of the moſt daring and profligate notions that ever inſulted public tranquillity. And would government ſet the example, there is not a doubt but ſuch a ſum might be raiſed

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as would ſufficiently demonſtrate the gratitude of the nation at large, to theſe annonymous but real patriots, who have done ſo much public good with ſo little noiſe: It would alſo ſhew, how much better paid as well as better employed, authors are in bracing than relaxing the ſacred bonds of ſociety, and that, with all our political turpitude and depravity, we have ſtill ſenſe and generoſity, and ſpirit enough, to inliſt even genius on the ſide of virtue.

LETTER XX.

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HOWEVER abſurd it may and muſt appear to all court and country paraſites, I cannot deny myſelf the pleaſure of figuring in my fond imagination an idea of thy converſion. But to ſuppoſe thee a real believer of what we believe, a chriſtian according to our conceptions of chriſtianity, and thoroughly conformable to all thoſe ſimplicities that render us ſo ſingularly obnoxious to fools and knaves of every deno-

denomination, is to ſuppoſe a revolution that would infallibly aſtoniſh the whole world. I will, notwithſtanding, for once in my life-time, indulge the pleaſing image, and, laying aſide the ſeverity of truth, feaſt my heart with the delicious fiction. It is well that when realities ceaſe to delight, we are not without ſome reſource in the prolific powers of creation.

In conſequence of thus thinking in matters of religion and morality as we do, thou canſt have but very little connections with thoſe men who delight in war. Under a reign ſo peculiarly juſt and circumſpect, we ſhould ſee *peace*, with all the mildneſs and benignity of Heaven, become once

more the glory of the Britiſh throne, and breathe ſalvation on this dejected and diſtracted country. On the entrance of that light, which is the life of the intellectual as much as the ſun is of the material world, all the tinſeled drapery of pride, which dazzle and delude the extravagant imaginations of earthly minds, which embroider thy public appearances and load thy moſt private retirements, which diſguiſe every object thou ſeeſt and hide every heart that is near thee, vaniſh like a viſion of the night. We ſhall no longer hear the rules of grammar daily ſacrificed to gratify the petulance of pedants, or the preſumption of fools. We ſhall no longer ſee ſlaves uncovering their heads, bowing their bodies, falling on

their

their knees, or doing that homage to thee which belongs only to the *king of kings:* We ſhall no longer ſee the heads of our wives and daughters, become the terror and deriſion of wiſe men. Nor can our ſight henceforth be confounded with that tawdry glare of jewels and ſtones without number, which often form ſo mortifying a contraſt between living and petrified duſt. Lo! nature once more burſts that cruel artificial cloud which has ſo long concealed her fineſt forms, and by ſmothering her charms deſtroyed her powers.

Happy period! My old exhauſted heart gladdens the firſt time for many a wretched year, and leaps within me at the glorious proſpect when a fright-

ful ſwarm of foreign friſieurs ſhall no longer invade theſe delightful plains, when the preſent importation of French faſhions, follies, and crimes ſhall come to an end, when men ſhall no longer impoſe on one another, by a gaudy and diſguiſed exterior, and when mere nominal honours ſhall give way to acknowledged integrity and worth, when all ranks of ſociety through the whole gradations of vulgar and poliſhed life, ſhall put on in public and private the heavenly ornament of a *meek* and *quiet ſpirit*. I proteſt the idea fills me with rapture, that in the very iſland which has given me and ſo many of the brethren and ſiſters birth, ſhould be thus diſtinguiſhed above all the kingdoms of

of the world by the commencement of the promiſed Millenium!

Thus it is, that ancient ſimplicity and truth, deſcend from their native ſkies, and with a luſtre equally bright and beauteous, enlighten the abodes of humanity. No more do mankind pique themſelves on their dexterity in the arts of hypocriſy. The very maſk of deceit, and the impenetrable garb of villainy, in which the ſpecies have been inveloped for ages, are now torn to pieces, and individuals as ſolicitous to expoſe their hearts, as they have long been to hide them: The moral ſtate of things, has accordingly undergone a thorough revolution: Yon cringing, fawning, fantaſtical group, who

bow

bow and ſimper and ſtrut in threatrical ſtarchneſs, ſink down at once into all their original inſignificance. The genius of gambling, diverſion, and parade, is ſupplanted by that of humanity, ſobriety, and meekneſs. The fiends of diſcord and treaſons withdraw their ugly, antiquated faces, and give room to all thoſe public and magnanimous virtues which are of heavenly extraction, and without which the impoſition of ſociety could not be borne.

Generoſity with a heart as large, a hand as liberal, an eye as inviting, and a countenance as open and ſerene as Heaven, leads the van in this celeſtial train. Next *honeſty*, emancipated from a tedious proſcription, blunt and undiſ-

diſguiſed as he is, with an air of native majeſty and hereditary independance ſtrides conſciouſly along. *Courage*, with a firm ſtep, and a commanding mein, a figure equally bold and ſedate, affecting nothing great, and diſcovering nothing little; always cool, yet always ready to act, ſits aloft on a throne of triumph. Mean while *patriotiſm*, rouſed by a laudable enthuſiaſm for the public welfare, lifts up her lofty head, and, with the magic of an aſpect full of maternal affection, and a voice in which authority, ſimplicity, and ſweetneſs happily combine, inliſts the congenial *virtues* in her ſervice. *Benevolence*, the eſſence of humanity, kindles affection in every heart, and encircles all the different claſſes of ſociety in one wide

wide and cordial embrace. O *modeſty*, *modeſty*, thou greateſt of all ſtrangers on this impudent, unfeeling earth, thou chaſteſt emanation of goodneſs that ever beamed on benighted minds, how heartily do I welcome thee with thy thouſand and ten thouſand bluſhes. The painted face, the naked ſhoulders, the heaving boſom, the ogling eye, and the wanton geſtures diſappear in thy preſence. Our ladies, whoſe charms have been celebrated from one end of the world to the other, whoſe beauty can derive no addition from the higheſt embelliſhments of art, literally array themſelves in modeſt apparel, with ſhamefacedneſs and ſobriety, and not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or coſtly ornaments of any kind, but with good works. Laſt

of

of all comes public *peace*, the ſweeteſt ſemblance of divinity that ever brightened the manſions of mortality. She has love in her heart, benignity in her eye, mercy in her hand, and her head is encircled with an olive diadem. Society reſumes her vigour, and harmony at her approach; while humanity, in concert with the graces, perfumes her ſteps with a profuſion of kindneſs. Violence, oppreſſion, murders, raviſhing of woman and virgins, burning, ſpoiling, depredations of every ſort, are no more felt or ſeen or dreaded in all theſe bleſſed dominions. The national debt is gradually diſcharged, commerce unmoleſted flouriſhes a new, taxes decreaſe without impairing the revenues, the army is diſcharged and diſperſed with honour

honour and gratitude, and the ſeveral officers retire from the field of Mars, ſome to that of Venus, and others to guard from the villainy of the reſt the chaſtity of thoſe they love, with maimed bodies, indeed, but unadulterated hearts. Thy court, O prince, no longer the public mart of political profligacy and female intrigue, no longer diſgraced with groups of ſycophants and ſharpers, is henceforth ſacred to honeſt men, and real patriots, to the few who have thy good and the good of the nation ſupremely at heart.

That the great Sovereign of all worlds, to whoſe paternal care and providence thou haſt ſo many obligations, may inſpire thee with the nobleſt virtues of a patriotic king,

king, direct thy counsels to the best means of accomplishing the salutary ends of government, and give energy and effect to the happy constitution of these realms, is the constant and ardent desire of

Thy faithful friend,

And loyal subject.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A,

Page 37, line 5, for *or* read *our*.
—— 49, —— 11, for *preferred* read *preserved*.
—— *ib.* —— 15, for *tone* read *ton*.
—— 62, —— 8, for *fairer* read *fiercer*.
—— 85, —— 10, for *adopted* read *adapted*.
—— 135, —— 10, for *their* read *there*,
—— 140 —— 5 for *presentment* read *presentiment*.

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